Foreign Broadcast Information Service 50 ANNIVERSARY 1941 - 1991

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-092
Monday
13 May 1991

Daily Report
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FBIS-NES-91-092 *13 May 1991*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

GCC Ready for Peace Conference 'Observers' Role

LD1105171691 London KUNA in Arabic 1429 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpts] Luxembourg, 11 May (KUNA)—The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] and EEC foreign ministers concluded their morning meeting here today by emphasizing the Kuwaiti attitude in the current phase. The conference sources told KUNA that the two communities' foreign ministers welcomed the liberation of Kuwait and Kuwait's participation in the conference once again to occupy its natural position in consolidating cooperation between the two communities. The sources added that the two communities' foreign ministers reaffirmed their support for Kuwait's firm rights to draw its border with Iraq according to the UN Security Council Resolution 678 and of the need to release all Kuwaiti prisoners. The European ministers showed readiness to participate in the reconstruction of Kuwait and to cooperate in extinguishing fires at the oil wells there, in addition to combatting and controlling environmental pollution perpetrated by the Iraqi forces during their occupation of Kuwait. The sources added that the foreign ministers look forward to their next conference, which will be held in Kuwait in 1992.

Qatari Foreign Minister Mubarak Bin-'Ali al-Khatir had emphasized in his speech to the conference of ministers that the GCC countries are ready to attend the international peace conference, should an invitation be addressed to them, as observers represented by the Gulf Council secretary general." [passage omitted]

Al-Khatir added that, if there are meetings of the countries in the region to examine issues related to arms control, to abolishing weapons of total destruction, to water resources, and to protecting the environment, the GCC countries will participate in them. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Source: 'Arafat-Bessmertnykh Meet Postponed

JN1005191691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 May 1

[Text] In Tunis, an informed Palestinian source has explained that the meeting between PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh scheduled to take place this week has been postponed to a later date in view of their official engagements. The same Palestinian source said that the meeting will be held in the not too distant future in a place and on a date that will be agreed upon later.

'Arafat Addresses Palestinians on Intifadah

LD1005194691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 10 May 91

[Address by PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat to the Palestinian people marking the 42d month of the intifadah; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the Name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted]

You masses of the heroic popular intifadah. You heroic people: male, female, youth and children in the homeland. You heroic people of the resistance and knights of the challenge. You steadfast people to defend the people and the revolution in southern Lebanon. You, the sons of our great Palestinian people everywhere. You, the sons of our great Arab nation. [pasage omitted]

The heroic intifadah is continuing unabated with confident steps toward victory. The staunch resistance is continuing, victorious and undaunted. The epic of Palestinian steadfastness is radiating with the sacrifices you are making in these extremely difficult times.

On the one hand, the Zionist occupation authorities are speeding up implementation of their settlement and expansion program by confiscating Palestinian lands and building settlements to house the new settlers. They thus are guilty of a blatant violation of all international charters and a provocative defiance of the resolutions and will of the international community under the protection, the patronage, and the financing of the United States.

On the other hand, the occupiers are escalating the economic war against our masses by continuing the blockade and the curfew and sealing off regions and erecting barriers to (?sever) the bonds of geographic and demographic unity of our land and our people. They are also intent on intensifying their war of starvation by closing the doors of employment to tens of thousands of our workers, thus adding to the danger of the blockade imposed by the United States to dry up the organization's financial resources—implemented by U.S. allies in the region.

Third, the repressive practices are being escalated and intensified until the criminal repression becomes an official policy and a law sanctioned by the Israeli Government and the Israeli Army and its herds of fascist settlers. These Zionist measures have been stepped up at all levels, reaching their peak as soon as the Gulf war ended. This constitutes, for those who hoisted the banner of international legality, an escapable challenge if they want to preserve the credibility they are claiming for themselves and to prove that they do not rely on duplicity and double standards when dealing with various issues. This constitutes a clear challenge for those who hurried to issue the resolutions with astonishing speed at the Security Council during the Gulf crisis so that they can prove their respect for the role of this

council and for the resolutions of the international institutions regarding Palestine and its people.

Events and their developments have revealed our genuine feeling concerning the thing against which we have been warning and the disaster after the Gulf war: the destruction of the Arab military power and the wasting of Arab money. The enemies of our nation are drinking the toast of their victory and some of us are full of joy for that so-called victory.

Our nation faced all these challenges. But the challenge now and the accusation now is directed basically and chiefly at the United States by all the official political forces and international politics. With U.S. money, settlements are being built. With unlimited U.S. support, Israel continues the occupation of Palestinian soil and Judaizing the sacred shrines.

With U.S. weapons our people are being repressed and persecuted; indeed, the U.S. Administration is ignoring the international resolutions which concern the Palestinian issue in the current move of the U.S. Administration in the area. It tries to normalize Arab-Israeli relations at the expense of Jerusalem and Palestine and the Palestinian people and their political and national rights.

Some, regrettably, ended the boycott which the Arabs had imposed against the companies which deal with Israel, or some of them. But let us remember God's holy words: And do thou be patient. For thy patience is but from God; nor grieve over them and distress not thyself because of their plots.

You struggling heroes, while we stress that our people will continue their gallant uprising and courageous resistance of occupation and racist fascism and Israeli aggression in Palestine and southern Lebanon, we reaffirm that the international community is required to move immediately to provide international protection for our masses in their confrontation of the policy of repression and building of settlements, annexation and Judaizing holy Jerusalem—the first of the two Qiblahs and the third holiest mosque; the place where the Prophet Muhammad began his divine flight to heaven, peace and the blessing of God be upon him—and the cradle of the Messiah, peace be upon him—and devouring and judaizing all our soil and our Islamic and sacred Christian shrines.

By taking advantage of the effects and results of the Gulf war, the occupiers imagined that, by escalating their policies in all fronts, they would be able to wear out our people, weaken the intifadah, and spread a spirit of despondency and hopelessness among our masses, and to force them to abandon their rights, their land, their steadfastness, their determination to resist and rebel. Suddenly they are trying to keep the outcome of the war for themselves. [passage omitted]

As it always happens, however, that illusion dispersed quickly, and the naive expectations based on the inability to understand our people's faith in their cause, their firmness and their determination to regain their inalienable rights, however high the price and great and sacrifices, collapsed. Those people are the people of epics and heroism, and the people of jihad. They will remain comrades on this land which has been blessed by God until Judgement Day. That is why the occupation and the occupiers were greatly surprised when our people, vitalized and united under the banner of the PLO, rose to confront the new eclipse and continue their revolution and intifadah, which will continue until the departure of the last occupation soldier from our sacred land. [passage omitted]

Brothers and beloved ones; this courageous and lofty stand has again quashed a battle which some thought they were able to ignite and as is always the case each time, the final word came from the heart of the occupied homeland and from those who are standing fast in the south of Lebanon and from those mujahidin in the diaspora. Despite the spears of the occupiers, the voice came forth thundering against anyone who tries to tamper with or cast doubt and to confirm the inalienable national [passage indistinct] of our mujahidin and people who are at the ready to engage in battle.

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. They prayed: Our Lord, pour out constancy on us and make our steps firm, help us against those that reject faith. [Koranic verse]

In the past few weeks, the unity of the Palestinian position, its firmness and invincibility was renewed by the convening of the Central Council session, which renewed the adherence to the Palestinian peace initiative announced in 1988 and the resolutions of the Arab summits and the international legitimacy to deal with various projects and international initiatives.

The Central Council renewed the commitment to the positive and effective participation in all the political efforts and to endeavors to gather the broadest Arab forces at the Arab and international level in order to correct the course of the political process to solve the Palestinian issue and the Arab- Israeli conflict with whatever is in harmony with those resolutions.

The council also stressed the need to convene the international peace conference with the participation of all sides concerned, including the PLO and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council under UN supervision; and it rejected any conference which is not based on international legitimacy and Arab legitimacy.

In the past few weeks we clarified the genuine Palestinian readiness to deal with the efforts to establish just peace in our area. We agreed that several meetings could take place between the Palestinian leading figures in the occupied territory and the U.S. secretary of state as part of this effort, I repeat as part of this effort.

National personalities during these three meetings or future meetings, as is clear from the proposal they

presented, underlined the unchanging Palestinian stand; all this was based on the profound understanding of the developments based on our decisive, firm stand—namely, our rejection as a people and mujahidin nation, the new world system which they are trying to impose on the area at our expense and at the expense of our rights; and our rejection of the U.S. policy which agrees with the essence of Israeli policy and its hostility and its indifference to international resolutions which concern our people and their rights and the use of double standards.

From here we have found that it is part of our national and pan-Arab duty to continue the contacts and meetings with the Arab brothers with more vigor so as to reformulate a unified Arab stand which can confront the challenges and repel the mounting dangers which threaten our security, our security as a nation and our pan-Arab security and our future. The challenge is great and imminent and it threatens everyone and there is no choice before us other than to close our ranks and restore the cohesion of Arab solidarity to defend the existence of our nation and its future and the battle: to be or not to be. The battle is whether to be or not to be.

This nation has its history and its faith. It will triumph despite the trials.

"In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We wished to be gracious to those who were being oppressed in the land to make them leaders in faith and make them heirs. [Koranic verse] [passage omitted]

In the international arena, we continued our contacts with numerous Islamic and African states and the friendly nonaligned states which proved that they are faithful to their principles and their constant support for our just cause. Also, the regular contacts with the Soviet Union and China contributed to strengthening [word indistinct] a number of current issues through which this area is passing.

In this connection I see the distinguished European stand. Here I would like to point out the statements of Presidents Mitterrand and Gorbachev recently concerning our national rights; also the stand of Japan, and the Islamic leaderships; also the stand of the pope; and the other Islamic and Christian religious leaderships.

In our contacts we concentrated in the international field on the question of providing economic suport for our masses inside the occupied land. These contacts have borne fruits with the friendly states and the international institutions and resulted with increasing the size and the type of aid given to the occupied area in various fields to recompense the siege which was imposed on us and on our people and on the families of our martyrs, detainees, wounded and on our national institutions, by order of the Americans.

You masses of the heroic intifadah. You valiants, knights of national leadership and active forces. You strugglers, male and female, members of female bodies, youth bodies, student bodies and worker bodies, as well as cadres of vocational groups, farmers, academics, civil servants, traders and artisan bodies. You valiant wounded people. You valiant detainees in detention centers. You who have been deported and have been able to surmount their plight through their sincere jihad. Today, as you are opening a new chapter, a developing chapter in the epic of the legendary steadfastness, as you are beginning yet again a month in the history of the march of the intifadah.

What is of a paramount importance to us today, however, is the need to safeguard the gains of the intifadah, its bases and its background as well as to secure its triumph and to preserve our national unity and to preserve our firm national unity which has attracted the respect and the dazzlement of the world. And therefore, we must bolster, bolster, and bolster such a national unity. We must consolidate such a national unity. We must consolidate such a national unity so as to open [words indistinct] to all dynamic forces and national cadres so sources of the revolutionary innovation might pour forth and the excellent struggle of the masses might emege so that we might be able recreate men, nationalists in the towns, villages and refugee camps [words indistinct] and to shoulder the responsibilities brought about by the policies of occupation and the wanton repression, and so as to increase the activities of our active forces.

Listen, listen to me, so as to increase the activities of our active forces everywhere and with all means. We always must stress the jamahiri nature of the intifadah by putting into perspective the struggling activities for which old cadres and the masses of our people have given their life and the need to understand the difficult living conditions being witnessed by our people. We must avoid slogans and programs which might lead the citizen to shoulder new responsibilities that might exhaust his energies—energies which should always be directed toward permanent confrontation to continue the revolution and the intifadah and to increase the fundamental activities at all levels and in all spheres. [passage omitted]

Algeria

Belhadj Warns FIS Will Try Ministers, Military

LD1205090291 Paris International Service in French 0530 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] In Algeria, the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has committed itself to the immediate implementation of Islamic law and trying former Algerian officials if it wins the general elections scheduled for 27 June.

Its fundamentalist leader, 'Ali Belhadj, stated the following on Friday: We are going to catch all the thieves and sell everything they own to pay their debts. There will be no forgiveness. The ministers and the military will be tried for having killed and tortured Muslims.

Egypt

Reportage on Soviet Foreign Minister's Visit

Makes Statement Upon Arrival

NC1005160991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 May (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh arrived in Cairo this evening on a three-day visit as part of his current Middle East tour.

Bessmertnykh was received at the airport by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Egyptian Ambassador in Moscow Ahmad Mahir; and Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Vladimir Polyakov.

Speaking to reporters at Cairo airport upon his arrival, the Soviet foreign minister expressed his eagerness to hold useful and constructive talks with Egyptian officials, noting that the exchange of views is vital for the peace process.

He pointed out that the Soviet Union and Egypt are constantly exchanging views on the regional peace process.

Bessmertnykh said his visit and the talks he will hold will enable both Egypt and the Soviet Union to develop a better understanding of the prospects for regional peace.

Here is the text of the statement Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh made upon his arrival in Cairo:

This is the first time I have come to the Middle East region. I believe this visit is coming at an appropriate time because we are living through a critical period. The opportunity exists to put the Middle East peace process in motion; we should not miss it. We should work to make the opportunity a reality.

During my tour, I am examining what the region's countries can do, because they are primarily responsible for the region's future.

I exchanged views with officials in Syria, Jordan, and Israel dusing my visits to these countries. This is the purpose of my current visit to Cairo and the talks I will hold here.

Exchanging views is vital for the peace process. I am looking forward to holding useful and constructive talks.

Egypt and the Soviet Union constantly exchange views on the peace process. We always seek to maintain continuous consultations. This visit and the talks I will hold will enable both sides to develop a better understanding of the prospects for peace.

Following the statement, Bessmertnykh replied to a question on whether he discussed with Israeli officials the resumption of relations between the Soviet Union and Israel and if the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel was examined. He said the Middle East situation and the other two issues were, indeed, discussed.

Mubarak Receives Bessmertnykh

NC1105081391 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] This morning President Husni Mubarak received Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, who arrived in Cairo yesterday on a three-day visit to Egypt.

Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, is scheduled to hold talks with Bessmertnykh later today, focusing on developments in the peace process in the Middle East.

Talks With 'Abd-al-Majid, Ghali

NC1105151391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1350 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh has expressed the belief that, despite some differences among the stands of the parties concerned, an opportunity exists to launch peace negotiations in the Middle East that must not be wasted.

This came in a statement which Bessmertnykh, who is visiting Cairo, made following his meeting today with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Bessmertnykh stressed the importance of the talks he will hold tomorrow, Sunday, with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The Soviet foreign minister said that his talks with Baker constitute an important step in light of the fact that the USSR will participate in the proposed conference on peace in the Middle East if it materializes.

Bessmertnykh described his current tour of the Middle East as "useful." He added that this tour is aimed at learning the views of all parties at first hand and then comparing them with Soviet ideas.

Aleksandr Bessmertnykh described his talks with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd- al-Majid and Dr. Butrus Ghali today as "important." He said they held a detailed discussion of the situation in the Middle East and the Gulf as well as Egyptian-Soviet relations.

Egypt and the Soviet Union signed 14 protocols on cooperation in various fields during President Husni Mubarak's visit to Moscow last year.

On his talks in Israel, Bessmertnykh said that he did not discuss the situation in the Gulf during his visit to Israel. He noted, however, that he had discussed this issue in detail with officials in the Arab countries he has visited, particularly during his talks in Cairo.

Foreign Ministers Make Statements

NC1105111791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1045 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—The talks between President Mubarak and Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh lasted for two hours and fifteen minutes. After the talks Bessmertnykh and Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, held a news conference. Each made a statement on the talks.

In his statement, Bessmertnykh said that he held important and expanded talks with President Mubarak, during which they discussed all the main issues related to the region as well as other issues of international importance. He pointed out that they discussed Egyptian-Soviet relations and their future, placing special emphasis on the importance of the existing political dialogue between the two countries. He said that they agreed on the vitality and importance of the current stage, and they will work to enhance and exchange views on international issues of common concern.

Bessmertnykh said that the largest part of the talks concentrated on figuring out a way to start the peace process for a settlement in the Middle East. He said: "We have agreed on the concept of this visualization." He stressed identity of views on this concept and expressed his belief that a peace conference, in which the parties to the crisis will participate, must be the course to pursue. He said they discussed the practical aspects of this conference on which agreement should be reached before the conference starts.

Bessmertnykh said that he heard views that are very close to his own and that this would pave the way for a common ground to address the problem. He said that the outcome of these talks is fruitful and extremely useful. He stressed that Egypt has played and will play an important role, noting that the Soviet Union greatly appreciates the Egyptian leadership's decision. Regarding a settlement, he said, the talks were not only important for the Soviet Union but for us all.

Bessmertnykh said he was happy to receive an invitation from President Mubarak to participate in the tripartite meeting tomorrow, Sunday, with him and with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. He said that the meeting will provide us with a chance to complete our talks, as well as to hold detailed talks on the current situation and to compare the views of the three countries at the same table.

In his statement, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid expressed pleasure at receiving the Soviet foreign minister. He said that President Mubarak's meeting with Bessmertnykh was very important and fruitful. He said he believes that the Soviet Union's role in the peace process is an important one. He added that the talks with President Mubarak dealt with a large number of bilateral, regional, and international issues.

Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh was asked about his expected meeting with Yasir 'Arafat. He said he hopes to meet with 'Arafat soon but the venue has not yet been determined.

Replying to another question on whether Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will visit the region soon, he said he hopes this will happen.

Regarding the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, Bessmertnykh said: Jewish emigration is caused by internal developments and is the result of the democratic trend in our country. He added: This trend encompasses all issues and not only that of the Soviet Jews' emigration. But we are interested in the emigration to certain areas, and we realize that the future and prosperity of these emigrants depend on the peace there. This is why we are interested in seeing peace prevail in the region.

On whether there is hope for holding a peace conference, the Soviet foreign minister said: There is hope in the possibility of progress if we reach an agreement between all the parties. Then the conference could be held. If this progress is not brought about, the situation will be very tragic. Therefore, we must all concentrate on the positive factors. I am naturally optimistic but I have warned against saying that we can defintely achieve results. Hence, we must work with all the parties, as there are still problems and difficulties.

He also said: There are many practical aspects. We are at the beginning of the process with the United States and other parties. We are moving slowly, but still moving. There is much that we have to understand, but there are also many commonly held points. Yet I cannot say that the conference will definitely be held.

Further on Remarks

NC1105145591 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has received Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his accompanying delegation for talks which were also attended by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; the Soviet ambassador to Egypt; and the Egyptian ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid and Mr. Bessmertnykh later held a news conference, at which 'Abd-al-Majid expressed his pleasure at receiving Soviet Foreign Minister Mr. Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and noted that the president's meeting with Bessmertnykh had been important and very fruitful. He said he believes that the Soviet Union has an important role to play in the peace process which is greatly welcomed by Egypt. He added that the talks dealt with various bilateral, regional, and international issus.

Speaking at the news conference, Bessmertnykh said he held extremely important and wide-ranging talks with President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, a leader of international stature, during which they discussed all key regional issues, as well as broader issues and the future of Egyptian-Soviet relations. He added that emphasis was placed on the importance of the existing political dialogue between the two countries and that they agreed on the importance and vitality of the current phase.

He pointed put that the talks centered on the search for ways to initiate a peace process that would result in a Middle East settlement and that they had agreed on the concept of this vision [mafhum hadha al-tasawwur], confirms the identity of the two sides' views. He said Egypt is playing a fundamental role in the settlement process and in paving the way for extensive talks, and that the Egyptian leadership's views are greatly appreciated by Soviet leaders.

Bessmertnykh was asked whether the Soviet Union prefers an international or regional conference, when the Soviet Union will restore ties with Israel, and who would represent the Palestinians at a conference. He replied: We are talking about a conference on peace in the Middle East. As for Palestinian representation, this must be agreed upon by the Palestinians. This is one of the issues that is being discussed very vigorously. He noted that he had stated in Israel that the Soviet Union is moving toward restoring its relations with Israel.

Asked about Egypt's stand on the peace conference, Dr. 'Abd-al- Majid said we must be optimistic. He added: The Soviet Union and the United States are working very seriously and intensively, and we are greatly encouraged by what we sensed from the Soviet foreign minister. He noted that the views of Egypt and the Soviet Union in this area are identical.

For his part, Bessmertnykh expressed hope that the parties concerned will reach agreement on the holding of a peace conference, for otherwise the situation will be truly tragic. He noted that action is needed to overcome certain difficulties.

On the prospects for a visit to the Middle East by the Soviet president, Bessmertnykh said he hoped such a visit took place soon. Commenting on the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, he said Jewish emigration to Israel is a result of the democratic current in the Soviet Union and internal developments there.

Views Conference, Baker Talks

JN1105132291 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 May 91

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Text] Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh has said: We believe that the peace conference proposed by the parties concerned is the appropriate means of reaching a Middle East settlement. Bessmertnykh noted, however, that there are some outstanding aspects that must be agreed upon before the conference in convened. Bessmertnykh declared that the participation of the Palestinians is necessary in this conference. He said: The Palestinians will decide who will represent them at the upcoming negotiations.

The Soviet foreign minister emphasized his country's important role in the peace process. He described his talks with President Mubarak as extremely important, having touched on many regional and international issues. He said: There is an agreement between Egypt and the Soviet Union on the concepts and course of the peace process.

The Soviet foreign minister met with President Mubarak this morning and held an official round of talks with Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid a short while ago. Our radio has learned that Bessmertnykh proposed to the Egyptian president the possibility of starting preliminary negotiations between the foreign ministers of the Arab confrontation states and Israel in Cairo during the second half of May to discuss the agenda of the peace conference. Bessmertnykh said he will discuss this proposal with the U.S. secretary of state and will also touch on the question of whether or not the call to begin a peace conference is in line with the views of the various parties concerned.

Bessmertnykh said if the immediate start of a peace conference is not approved, he will propose to James Baker that the two discuss, each in his own way, feasible steps and a subsequent exchange of special memorandums explaining the dimensions of these steps. Bessmertnykh said he will propose to Baker that they take a strong position against any regional party that rejects the peace proposals.

Reviews Peace, Ties With Sidqi

NC1105204291 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi received Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his accompanying delegation at his office this evening. The meeting was also attended by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of cabinet affairs and minister of state for administrative development.

During the two-hour meeting, the two officials reviewed current efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the

Middle East. The two sides expressed their eagerness to see these efforts produce positive results. Bilateral relations and ways to bolster them, particularly in the economic and trade fields, were also discussed in light of the long-term trade agreement signed during President Mubarak's visit to the Soviet Union last year.

During the meeting, it was agreed that the Egyptian-Soviet joint economic committee will meet under the cochairmanship of the two countries' economy ministers as soon as possible to discuss ways to increase the volume of trade exchange between the two countries.

Views Cairo Talks, Baker Meeting

NC1205051391 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] After a round of talks yesterday evening with Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh stated that the talks concentrated on bilateral relations and ways to develop them in various fields, particularly Soviet participation in power plants projects in the Sinai.

Regarding U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's statement on Gulf countries' participation in the peace process, Bessmertnykh said that he and James Baker will discuss this issue this evening during talks. He said that during the meeting with President Mubarak and Baker, the Middle East situation, efforts to boost the peace process, and disarmament issues will be discussed. He said that he will then leave for Saudi Arabia and that he is expected to meet with the Lebanese foreign minister.

Views Peace Meet, Alternate Chairmen

NC1205142191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1325 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh has stated that his country has held intensive contacts in the last few months with all concerned countries in the Middle East, as well as the United States and European countries, to lay a foundation for a peace conference that is acceptable to all parties.

In statements today reported by the Soviet agency NOVOSTI, he said that an understanding has been reached with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on Moscow's and Washington's intention of serving as alternate chairmen of the conference. He added that Moscow and Washington will work together to bring representatives of countries which have refused to speak to one another for many long years to the negotiating table.

The Soviet minister said that (?defining) the role of the alternate chairmen of the conference is one of the questions now being discussed with all possible participants in the conference. He stressed that the joint Soviet-U.S. action is an important factor in launching the settlement process and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Bessmertnykh stressed that for the first time in many years, a real opportunity has emerged to start the settlement process in the Middle East. He said that what is important now is finding a formula acceptable to all parties directly involved in the Arab- Israeli conflict, a formula which can be the basis for organizing and holding a peace conference. He added that this conference should be organized in such a way that participants begin their work hopeful of achieving results satisfactory to them.

Regarding the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and whether any new agreements on this question have been reached, the Soviet foreign minister said that the increased rate of emigration from the Soviet Union is the product of democratic practices there and that there is no intention of retreating from this process. He stressed that there are no new agreements on the emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union. He added that the Soviet Union is categorically opposed to the building of settlements in the territories occupied by Israel where emigrants are settled, because this raises a major obstacle to the peace process.

The Soviet foreign minister said that his country supports the European Community's endeavor to participate in the process to find a Middle East settlement and hold a peace conference. He stressed that the European countries can contribute to the search for solutions acceptable to all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to the development of close and fruitful cooperation with the countries of the region.

The Soviet minister added that European participation in a Middle East conference is one of the issues being discussed during his talks in the countries of the region.

Reportage on Baker-Bessmertnykh Meeting in Cairo

Baker Arrives 12 May

NC1205174691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1646 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in Cairo this afternoon for a two-day visit to Egypt as part of his current tour of the region, the fourth since the end of the war to liberate Kuwait.

He was received at Cairo airport by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Talks on Peace, Summit Begin

NC1205193091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1825 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—The first meeting in Cairo between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and

Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh began at the Semiramis Hotel, where Baker is staying, at 2030 today.

Soviet sources said the two ministers will discuss peace efforts in the Middle East as well as arrangements for the summit expected to be held in Moscow between U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The two ministers are scheduled to hold their second meeting at the Soviet ambassador's residence in Cairo tomorrow.

Hold News Conference

NC1305060991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2145 GMT 12 May 91

[All quotation marks as received]

[Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker held a news conference after their talks tonight. The talks lasted approximately two hours.

At the beginning of the news conference, Baker and Bessmertnykh each made a statement. In his statement, Baker said that the discussions dealt with joint efforts to give impetus to the peace process and the convening of a conference for peace in the Middle East. He said that there is a great deal of agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on what is required, what must be done, and on direct negotiations between the Arabs and Israel as well as between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

In his statement made before the journalists asked their questions, Baker added that he will continue his talks with the Soviet foreign minister tomorrow [13 May] to discuss the issues of peace in the Middle East and those related to the bilteral relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Aleksandr Bessmertnykh then made a statement. He said he and the U.S. secretary of state discussed practical aspects and the formulas for peace in the Middle East.

He said that the discussions were realistic and good and that he agrees with what Baker has said.

Responding to journalists' questions, Baker said that he did not have a chance to hear the Soviet foreign minister's views on the results of his tour in the region "because he ends his tour in the region as I begin mine."

Baker then said that differences still exist among the parties concerned but that the points of agreement are more [than the points of disagreement]. We have much to do to bring closer the views of concerned regional parties.

Baker said that he agreed with Bessmertnykh that work must continue to achieve this goal.

At the news conference, Baker pointed out that the points on which no agreement has been reached are comparatively small, merely one or two matters. There are more points on which agreement has been reached.

Asked to shed more light on the points of agreement, Baker said: We now find Arab states who want to sit face-to-face with Israel for the first time, referring to the declaration that was issued by the Gulf Cooperation Council yesterday.

He added: As I have just said, many questions have been agreed upon. In fact, there are one or two, and probably three, questions on which no agreement has been rached. Therefore, it is our duty to continue working to achieve solutions to these questions.

The U.S. secretary of state said: "We are engaged in intensive work in cooperation with the new parties to the conference. We have accomplished a major portion of this work. Some differences still exist, but we will continue. I am pleased that we will continue our work.

Baker also said: "We discussed the efforts being made to give momentum to the peace process and the convening of a peace conference in the Middle East, indicating that there is a good deal of agreement between himself and Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh on what must be done about direct face-to-face negotiations between the Arabs and Israel, as well as between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Baker noted that he will continue his talks with Minister Bessmertnykh tomorrow to discuss the issue of peace in the Middle East, bilateral relations, and arms limitation.

Responding to a question about his appraisal of the situation, Bessmertnykh said: I agree with much of what the U.S. secretary of state has said. We are at a stage in which very persistent efforts are being made with those who will participate in the conference. We have accomplished a major part of the work. There have been positive changes for the better on the part of all the parties.

He indicated that there are still some differences and also differences in degree of positive changes by the parties concerned. Therefore, we must continue our joint efforts.

In his responses to journalists' questions, Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said: "We discussed practical aspects and the proposed formulas in an attempt to crystallize them—formulas concerning peace in the Middle East. He described the talks as having been realistic and good."

Responding to a journalist's question, Baker said that he did not have a chance to hear the Soviet minister's views on the results of his tour in the region. He said that there are points of difference but that the points of agreement are more as far as all the parties are concerned.

Regarding the peace process in the region and Israeli Prime Minister Shamir's statements rejecting [the principle] of land for peace, Baker said that one of the points that has been agreed upon is to use UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 to settle the problem, indicating that each party has its own interpretation [of the resolutions].

He added: "We are trying to make the parties in the area sit together in order to achieve an agreement on these resolutions because the Arab states have one interpretation of these two resolutions and Israel has another.

Hold Second Round of Talks

NC1305080291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0735 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—The second round of talks between Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his U.S. counterpart James Baker opened at the residence of the Soviet ambassador in Cairo this morning.

In their first round of talks in Cairo yesterday, Baker and Bessmertnykh discussed the joint efforts to give impetus to the peace process and to convene a Middle East peace conference.

News Conference After 2d Round

NC1305113991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1106 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his U.S. counterpart James Baker held a news conference today following their second round of talks, which lasted for two hours.

Bessmertnykh made a statement, saying that they had concluded their second round of talks, which focused on a number of issues, most important being the situation in the Middle East and ways to achieve a peaceful settlement.

He added that the talks provided a good opportunity to discuss bilateral relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, arms control, and the ban on chemical weapons, in addition to a number of regional issues and problems, such as Ecuador and Afghanistan.

The Soviet foreign minister added that an agreement was reached to exchange visits between officials of the two countries to discuss economic relations. Bessmertnykh described the talks in Cairo as fruitful and good.

Secretary James Baker said that there are fundamental differences between Syria and Israel's positions on the role of the United Nations, the steps needed to hold an international peace conference, and the functions of a peace conference. He added that the United States will continue its efforts to overcome the obstacles facing the idea of a peace conference.

About the next U.S.-Soviet summit, Baker said that agreement was reached to continue discussing the possibility of holding this summit and that Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev want one. He added that this summit is expected to be held in the middle of this summer, although this depends on achieving tangible progress in the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (Start) [name, acronym as received].

The Soviet foreign minister stressed that his talks on the Middle East have achieved some sort of progress by reaching a broad common ground and that the remaining problems are fewer than they were, thus giving more hope.

Asked about differences between Syria and Israel's views on the international conference, Baker said that during his talks in Syria and Israel, there was a question about United Nations participation in the peace conference. He emphasized that agreement will have to be reached on this point.

Replying to a question on U.S. forces remaining in the Gulf, Bessmertnykh said: This issue was discussed, and we will continue our discussion.

For his part, Baker stressed that the United States is eager to provide humanitarian assistance to the Kurds. He said he had informed Bessmertnykh that his country does not wish to remain in the Gulf, provided the United Nations assumes the humanitarian responsibility for assisting the Kurds in northern Iraq. The U.S. forces will withdraw from northern Iraq immediately after security and peace have been accomplished for the Kurds.

Answering a question on Syria's position on the peace conference, Baker said: It is obvious that we prefer Syria's participation in this conference, because Syria is an absolutely important partner in this conference. He expressed his hope that efforts will continue to overcome the obstacles and to bring Syria and Israel's views closer. He noted that the conference should be held with the participation of all countries concerned and that the conference should be productive for the region's countries.

Baker was asked about reports confirming that he has not achieved any progress in Syria and that the Syrian stand has not changed. He said: This is not an accurate description of what happened. The problem lies with the degree of the United Nations participation in the peace conference. There is a fundamental difference between Syria and Israel's stands, and this is what we are trying to overcome with Bessmertnykh's participation in the continuing talks.

The news conference, which was held at the Soviet ambassador's residence, was attended by more than 100 Egyptian, Arab, and foreign journalists representing various international newspapers, radios, and television networks.

Mubarak Receives Baker

NC1305110991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and the accompanying delegation at the Presidential Office in Heliopolis this afternoon.

Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary at the Foreign Ministry and head of the President's Office for Political Affairs; and U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Frank Wisner attended the meeting.

Mubarak Meets Baker, Bessmertnykh

NC1305112391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1110 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak met today with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh. Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, attended the meeting.

President Mubarak held a one-hour meeting with the U.S. secretary of state and his accompanying delegation earlier. President Mubarak will host a luncheon in honor of the two countries' foreign ministers.

Ten-Point Agreement Detailed

TA1305133391 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 13 May 91 pp 1, 15

[Text] A joint Soviet-U.S. communique is to be issued in Cairo. This communique represents the Soviet-U.S. position on a settlement. The articles of this communique, obtained in detail by AL-MANAR, are as follows:

1. The United States and the USSR jointly insist on solving the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects and addressing its causes.

2. Moscow and Washington are committed to international legitimacy based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

3. A phased peace conference is to be convoked under the auspices of Washington and Moscow. The opening session will be attended by a European and a UN envoy.

4. The parties concerned will announce their agreement on, and participation in, the conference.

5. The conference will be held permanently in the form of committees until a peaceful settlement is reached.

6. The conference's sessions will be held in several capitals; namely, Washington, Cairo, Geneva, and Moscow.

7. The following steps will precede the conference:

a. Israel will take steps to ease the suffering of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

b. Media and propaganda incitement between Israel and the Arab parties will be halted.

c. A written memorandum will be submitted by Moscow to Tel Aviv in which Moscow will announce its agreement to provide further facilities and concessions regarding the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

d. Upon the start of the conference Israel will announce a halt to settlement. Israel insists that this be for a seven-month period.

e. Israel will announce its readiness to withdraw from Lebanon.

8. Upon the start of the second round of the proposed conference, the participating Arab states will announce their readiness to recognize Israel.

9. Discussion of substantial issues, such as Jerusalem, will be conducted in the second stage of the conference.

10. The PLO will participate in the final round of the conference, attended by the UN secretary general.

Editor Views 'Uproar' Over Troop Withdrawal

NC1105074491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2225 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 May (MENA)—Ibrahim Sa'dah, chief editor of the weekly AKHBAR AL-YAWM, has expressed in his weekly article his extreme astonishment at the uproar in several world capitals over President Husni Mubarak's decision to withdraw all Egyptian troops from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. He was also surprised at all of the contradictory interpretations that many parties volunteered to justify this decision.

In an article entitled "The Meaning of the Return of the Egyptian Troops," Sa'dah said President Mubarak was very clear in explaining the reasons for his decision to withdraw our troops from Kuwait. Despite this clarity, the enemies of rapproachment between Egypt and its Gulf sisters were quick to question the reasons for this decision, thus reminding us of the same attitude they showed during the Gulf crisis, by claiming that differences between Egypt and Kuwait or Egypt and Saudi Arabia were behind the recent decision.

Sa'dah added that when Riyadh made a statement affirming that these rumors are false and contrived, the devious people who want to cast doubt tried anew to exaggerate the differences between Egypt and Kuwait. Unfortunately for them, Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has made a statement to the paper's correspondent in Kuwait stressing his country's and all of the Gulf states' adherence to the agreements in the Damascus Declaration. At

the same time, he denounced those who woefully attempt in vain to harm the relations between Egypt and Kuwait.

French Delegation Arrives for Military Talks

NC1105190491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1810 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—French Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Jacques Lanxade arrived in Cairo this evening at the head of a military delegation paying a five-day visit to Egypt.

General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib, commander in chief of the Armed Forces and minister of defense and war production, is expected to receive the French official tomorrow morning for a discussion of bilateral military cooperation and ways of bolstering it.

Egyptian-French military talks will begin tomorrow between Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Safiy-al-Din Abu-Shinaf and Admiral Lanxade at the Defense Ministry's General Headquarters in Madinat Nasr. [passage omitted]

Military Delegations Meet

NC1205111791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0958 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—Egyptian and French military delegations met in Cairo today. Lieutenant General Safiy-al-Din Abu-Shinaf headed the Egyptian side. Admiral Lanxade, joint chief of staff, headed the French delegation. Lt. Gen. Muhammad Husayn Tantawi, chief of the Armed Forces operations; Major General Mustafa Halim, assistant chief of staff; Maj. Gen. Muhammad 'Ali Bajatu, chief of staff of the Air Defense force; and senior Armed Forces commanders attended the talks on the Egyptian side. The French delegation and French Ambassador in Cairo Alain Dejammet attended on the French side. At the beginning of the talks Lt. Gen. Abu-Shinaf made a statement stressing the strength of Egyptian-French relations, particularly in the military area. He noted that the talks will be fruitful and useful and in the interest of the two countries and their Armed Forces.

After the two-hour meeting, Lt. Gen. Abu-Shinaf said they discussed expanding cooperation between the two Armed Forces, particularly in joint training, reciprocal visits, scholarships, arming, and joint industrialization within the framework of the military cooperation protocol signed by both countries. He said the talks reasserted both countries' common views of the current problems in the Gulf area, Africa, and the Arab Maghreb. He noted that they also discussed regional issues, the proposed security systems, and the method of figuring out a security order in the region. He pointed out that the talks showed France's full understanding of Egypt's major role in the region.

Admiral Lanxade said this is his first visit to Egypt since he assumed his new post, but that he had previously worked with the Egyptian naval forces. He said there is a great opportunity to promote cooperation between the two countries, especially since Presidents Mubarak and Mitterrand and their governments have excellent ties. He said: Our forces fought with the Egyptian forces side by side to liberate Kuwait a few weeks ago, which established a fraternity of arms whose value we know very well. He said: We are now working to establish the foundations of a permanent peace in the region, which is vital for world peace. He stressed that his talks with the Egyptian chief of staff on bilateral cooperation and the situation in the region were very important and showed a great deal of congruence and identical views.

Abu-Talib Receives French Admiral

NC1205114191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1025 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—At noon today Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib, commander in chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces and minister of defense and war production, received French Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Lanxade and his accompanying delegation. They discussed ways to bolster military cooperation between Egypt and France in training, arming, joint industrialization, exchange of expertise, and visits within the framework of the special relations between the two countries. They also reviewed the situation in the region and the role of the Egyptian and French forces in the liberation of Kuwait. Defense Ministry Secretary General Major General Muhammad Husayn Tantawi and a number of senior Armed Forces commanders also attended the meeting. Lanxade laid a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldiers in Nasr city this morning.

IMF Executive Director Arrives in Cairo 11 May

NC1105101191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0925 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—IMF Executive Director 'Abd-al-Shakur al-Sha'lan arrived in Cairo this morning on a four-day visit to Egypt within the framework of the final agreement between Egypt and the IMF. In an arrival statement, al-Sha'lan said that the economic reform program Egypt signed with the IMF is completely Egyptian. He said that the IMF's role was confined to helping draw up the program to reach its required goal of increasing economic growth, opening economic oppportunities for the private sector, and limiting government interference in the economic process to a minimum.

Al-Sha'lan said that the Paris Club does not authorize cancellation or rescheduling of debts without agreement from the IMF. He said that the Paris Club will meet 22-24 May to consider easing the burden of Egypt's debts. In conclusion, he said that the IMF did not impose any conditions on Egypt relating to suspension of appointment of graduates.

Meets With Mubarak, Comments

NC1205093891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0842 GMT 12 May 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—Following a meeting with President Husni Mubarak today, IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus praised Egypt's economic policy and the government's recent measures to reform the economy. He said that Egypt is going through a historic stage that will enable it to make progress and to develop in various fields. He noted that the IMF supports Egypt's economic position and understands its circumstances. He pointed out that Egypt's agreement with the IMF will give it the opportunity to obtain support from international financial institutions. He said that the IMF board of directors will meet in Paris soon to ratify this agreement. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Minister Denies Differences With Egypt

NC1105064891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 May (MENA)—Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has affirmed that the Egyptian and Kuwaiti Governments have not had any differences that led to the decision to withdraw the Egyptian troops from Kuwait.

In an interview with the newspaper AKHBAR AL-YAWM to be published Saturday, Shaykh al-Sabah accused certain parties, without naming them, of trying to divide the Arab ranks. He said there is a malicious campaign of rumors to drive a wedge between the Arab states and that these rumors were picked up by Western news agencies and radios.

The Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister added that the Damascus Declaration is the practical and decisive response to these unfounded rumors. The purpose of these rumors is to cast doubts on this declaration because the declaration does not serve the interests of the rumormongers. He added that the Damascus Declaration stressed the contribution of the Egyptian troops in preserving security in the Gulf region, alongside the Syrian troops and those from the Gulf Cooperation Council members.

KUNA Cites Denial

LD1105094491 London KUNA in Arabic 0835 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 May (KUNA)—The [Kuwaiti] deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Shaykh Salim al-Sabah al-Salim, has stressed that there that may have led to the decision to withdraw Egyptian forces from Kuwait.

In a statement to AKHBAR AL-YAWM, the deputy prime minister said that certain parties want to divide Arab ranks, that there is a tendentious campaign of rumors aimed at creating discord among Arab countries, and that Arab news agencies and radio stations have been carried away by it.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister said the Damascus Declaration is a practical and decisive reply to these false rumors. The aim of these rumors is to undermine the declaration which does not serve their [rumormongers'] purposes, because the Damascus Declaration stressed the contribution of Egyptian forces in the maintenance of security in the Gulf region in conjunction with Syrian forces and the forces of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries.

The newspaper added that the Kuwaiti deputy prime minister made the statement to AKHBAR AL-YAWM yesterday morning at Kuwait Airport before leaving for Luxembourg to attend the meeting of GCC and EC foreign ministers. After his visit to Luxembourg, Shaykh Salim al-Sabah will go to Cairo. He will arrive there tomorrow morning to attend the Arab League foreign ministers' meeting. A meeting of the foreign ministers of the signatories to the Damascus Declaration—Egypt, Syria, and the GCC countries—will be held in Cairo.

Committees Formed on Reparations, Prisoners

LD1205185791 London KUNA in Arabic 1635 GMT 12 May 91

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 12 May (KUNA)—The Council of Ministers held a meeting this morning at the prime minister's headquarters chaired by His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister.

Dhari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman, minister of state for cabinet affairs, made the following statement: The council opened the proceedings by reviewing the reply sent by his highness the heir apparent and prime minister to His Excellency Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, prime minister in the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt, which dealt with the strong fraternal ties between the two fraternal countries and ways of strengthening these relations.

His highness the heir apparent and prime minister informed the cabinet on the outcome of the talks he held with U.S. Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, who visited the country last week. These talks dwelled on ways of preparing future arrangements to improve opportunities to provide peace and stability in the region, in addition to improving cooperation between the two friendly countries in all fields and spheres. [passage omitted]

Proceeding from the UN Security Council resolutions regarding the Iraqi regime's commitment to pay full reparations to Kuwait for the damage and destruction caused by acts of pillage, robbery, destruction, and demolition of public and private property during the Iraqi regime's spiteful aggression against Kuwait, the cabinet reviewed a draft proposal on setting up a public body to assess compensation for the damage caused by this aggression. This public body will investigate claims, define damage, and assess losses incurred by the victims in order that the government take the necessary measures when asking Iraq for the due reparations.

The cabinet studied the provisions of the draft proposal and decided to accept them during this first session and endorse them during the second session of the cabinet's next meeting.

The cabinet also decided to set up a "national committee for affairs of prisoners and those missing," whose members are:

Minister of justice and legal affairs, chairman; the ministers of the interior, information and defense, members; and Dalal Faysal al-Zaban, Dr. 'Abd al-Muhsin 'Abd

'Abdallah al-Kharafi, Dr. Ghanim Hamad al-Najjar, and Fahd 'Abdallah al-Khazzam, members. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Urges Muslims To 'Unify Ranks'

LD1105204191 Riyadh SPA in English 1912 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Hyderabad, India, May 1, SPA—Custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz has urged the Moslems world-wide to unify ranks and forge closer cooperation and coordination in the light of the recent crisis of the Arab Gulf region and its grave consequences. King Fahd's remarks came in a message read on his behalf by 'Abd-al-Wahhas 'Abd-al-Wasi, the visiting Saudi pilgrimage and endowments minister Saturday before the opening session of an international symposium on Hajj and its rules organized by the Dar al-Eloum Islamic Universtity in Hyderabad city. King Fahd expressed best compliments and wishes to participants of this important Islamic gathering, who will study matters pertaining to Hajj—just few days before pilgrims from various parts of the world travel to the holy sites in the Kingdom to perform Hajj rituals. The Saudi monarch told the gathering that enemies of the Islamic nation have exploited the recent crisis and divisions to multiply sufferings of the Islamic nation, hatched their suspicious plots for weakening the nation, sowed seeds of discord and dismantled its solidarity.

"The enemies of Islam are quite confident that our unity is a strength that generates fear in them. Moreover, they believe that the Moslems' solidarity would foil and undermine their conspiracies and defeat them, so they usually attempt to trigger seditions, revive old spites and intrigues until they could pave a secured path for execution of their painful strikes and spread killings, plunderings and corruption on the Earth," King Fahd said. Referring to the malicious and spiteful campaigns of the enemies of the Islamic nation, King Fahd said they have resorted to another method of wars to destroy the new generation through export of poisons—smuggling of drugs into the Islamic and Arab states as an effective mean to pull down and weaken human and ideological capabilities of the Moslem youth, the most precious wealth of the Islamic nation.

King Fahd expressed regrets and pains over unawareness of some Moslems about hostile plots that are being designed by the enemies to destroy the Islamic nation and said the recent crisis of the Arab Gulf stands as the best example of such a regretable behaviour.

"The tragedy had reached a peak when we saw a brother stabbing a brother, legitimating his blood, money and honour, yet we saw ulema who supposed to have belonged to the Islamic faith, turning a deaf ear on this and trying to find weak justifications for the invasion of Kuwait," the king said. "If all Moslems come together and depend on the almighty Allah, such a crisis and difference could have never taken place, but the almighty God allows occurence of such divisions to test the faith of the Moslems," the Saudi monarch added. He called on the Moslems to fight those who are disguising as ulema, but, in fact, are serving the interests of the enemies of Islam.

King Fahd expressed pride that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is looking after affairs of the Islamic sacred places and thanked the almighty God for the great honour bestowed on it. He pledged that the Kingdom will spare no effort to provide anything at its disposal to serve pilgrims and enable them to perform their rituals in peace, security and ease.

"The Kingdom feels delight and pleasure in bearing its great responsiblity towards pilgrims and ensuring performance of their rituals in the framework of the Islamic principles and rules," the king said. He emphasized that the Kingdom will remain committed to the Islamic teachings—the basis of its foundations and said its slogans will remain unchanged. "The Kingdom will go-ahead with its moderate policies, which are aimed at reconciling Moslem states and unifying their ranks in line with the Koranic teachings," King Fahd said.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will continue its untiring efforts to unify ranks of the Islamic nation and will use any available means to realise that goal and the targeted Islamic solidarity, so that the Islamic nation could revive its glorious past and play its leading role in recovering its usurped rights and territories including Quds [Jerusalem], Beitul Maqdis, Palestine, Golan and other occupied lands," King Fahd said. The Saudi monarch cited with pride the current expansion project of the two holy mosques in mecca and medina to accommodate larger numbers of pilgrims.

"I would like to seize this opportunity to make a faithful appeal to all conflicting brothers of the Islamic nation, to lay down arms, save bloods, resort to reason, not to fire and destroy equipments. I urge them all to respect sacred bonds—bonds of faith, language, blood and spirit that join us together. I call on them to renounce the use of force, foil conspiracies and save the Arab and Islamic people from the devastating results of the Gulf crisis and preserve potentials of the Islamic nation from dispersion," the king said.

King Fahd also appealed to the entire international community and concerned organizations to work for establishing peace and support justice, right and fairness. King Fahd thanked participants and organizers of the symposium for showing much concern on affairs of Hajj and umrah (the minor pilgrimage) and expressed hope that the gathering would come out with positive results that could serve the Islamic interests. He said the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is attaching great importance to the gatherings. "As such, the Kingdom has sent a high

level delegation led by the Saudi pilgrimage and endowments minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Abd-al-Wasi," the Saudi monarch added.

Yemen

'Fundamentalist' Groups Protest Draft Constitution

NC1205171191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Sanaa, 12 May (MENA)—More than 20,000 supporters of the Yemeni Rally Party for Reform [Hizb al-Tajammu' al-Yamani lil-Islah] and other political groups that oppose the draft Yemeni constitution marched through the streets of Sanaa today. A popular referendum on the constitution will be held on 15 May.

The demonstrators stopped traffic along a number of the capital's streets before they assembled in al-Sab'in Square, the largest square in the Yemeni capital. They chanted Islamic fundamentalist slogans condemning united Yemen's first constitution as secular and socialist. They also displayed copies of the Koran and banners demanding the supremacy of shari'a and denouncing price increases for basic goods.

Chants were heard calling for amending the constitution and closing a brewery which the Yemeni Presidential Council has decided to convert to a soft drink factory. Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zindali, one of the leaders of the Yemeni fundamentalist movement, read a statement on behalf of the demonstrators in which he noted the authorities' continued disregard of the demand of Yemen's scholars, tribal leaders, and many politicians and jurists to amend the constitution to bring it into line with the book of God and his noble Prophet.

The statement outlined the demonstrators' demands, chief among which is their call that the draft constitution be amended before the referendum is held, on the basis of a recently issued statement that no law violating the rules of Islamic shari'a will be approved. The statement also demanded that serious measures be taken to ease the suffocating economic crisis and soaring prices which are adding to the burdens of the Yemeni people.

The demonstrators held a rally which was attend by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, leader of the Yemeni Rally Party for Reform and one of the most prominent tribal leaders in Yemen, and Judge Yahya Lutf al-Fasil, a senior representative of the fundamentalist movement. The rally decided that a delegation of scholars and notables would lead the march to the nearby presidential headquarters to meet with the Yemeni Presidential Council and submit the demonstrators' demands.

The demonstration was staged three days before the first popular referendum in Yemen's political history and 10 days before the first anniversary of the declaration of Yemeni unity.

President Receives Delegation

NC1205175791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1650 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Sanaa, 12 May (MENA)—Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council, this afternoon received a delegation of scholars, shaykhs, and representatives of the Yemeni Rally Party for Reform and the Party of the Association of Yemeni Sons [Hizb Rabitat Abna' al-Yaman].

The delegation delivered a message addressed to Lt. Gen Salih and "and the other members of the Presidential Council from the participants in the peaceful demonstration organized by the Rally and Yemeni Sons Parties in Sanaa, demanding that the draft constitution be amended before a referendum is held and that measures be taken to deal with the economic situation in the country.

The Yemeni president told the delegation that the Presidential Council and the government will study the message. He also explained that the Presidential Council's statement of 22 April stressed unchanging principles with regard to the supremacy of Islamic shari'a over all legislation enacted in the Yemeni Republic.

The Presidential Council has set 15 and 16 May as the date for the popular referendum in all Yemeni governorates on the unified Yemeni state's first constitution.

Saddam Presides Over Leadership Meeting

JN1105120391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1151 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—President Saddam Husayn this morning presided over a meeting which was attended by 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC]; members of the RCC Taha Yasin Ramadan; Vice President Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf; Prime Minister Sa'dun Hammadi; and Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn.

Meets With RCC Members 12 May

JN1305044591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2104 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—President Saddam Husayn met here today with a number of Revolution Command Council [RCC] members.

A number of state officials attended the meeting.

Information Minister on New Press Photo Policy

JN1205082191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 12 May 91 p 2

[Text] Baghdad (Agencies)—Iraq's small band of English-language newspaper readers had a shock on Saturday: for the first time in more than 10 years, The Baghdad Observer failed to carry a cover picture of President Saddam Husayn.

A spokesman for the Information Ministry, which publishes the paper, said the absence of the president's picture—or even a story about him—reflected a new policy; such photos will be used only when news events merit them.

It appears to be part of the government's pledge to create a more open and democratic society in Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war.

The spokesman said the broadsheet newspaper's front page had carried a picture of the president in every issue since the start of the Iraq-Iran war in 1980.

The photos were often old, studio-type pictures of the president unrelated to any news event.

Baghdad's Arabic-language newspapers, with much wider circulations, continued the old policy, however. All carried photos and articles about the president.

The main Arabic dailies continued to devote large chunks of their front pages to President Saddam's photographs under the policy introduced in 1980.

The front page of the pro-government Kurdish newspaper Al-'Iraq had an old picture of a smiling Saddam dressed as a Kurd with snow-clad mountains in the background.

President Saddam has tried to distance himself from day-to-day affairs in Iraq since the end of the Gulf war and post-war rebellions in the Kurdish north and mainly Shiite south.

His new government, appointed in March with a reforming brief, has begun to cautiously encourage criticism of officials and more debate in the media as part of plans to bring democracy to Iraq.

The only Arab newspaper not to carry the obligatory Saddam photograph is Babil, launched six weeks ago by the president's elder son 'Udayy. It has adopted a similar line to The Baghdad Observer.

The media still gives huge amounts of coverage to President Saddam.

Nightly television news programmes in the past two weeks have dwelt at length on his post-rebellion visits to the provinces.

It was not clear whether the main Arabic dailies would follow the lead of Babil and The Baghdad Observer.

The English-language newspaper serves Iraq's foreign community, virtually non-existent with the closure of foreign companies and the departure of most diplomats after Iraq invaded Kuwait last August.

Reportage on Kurdish Talks With Regime

Final Agreement 'Ruled Out'

NC1005163791 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Kurdish sources have ruled out the possibility of a final agreement being reached between a Kurdish delegation and the tyrant and his henchmen during the current round of negotiations in Baghdad. The sources said that differences still exist between the two sides concerning the delineation of the autonomous region and the type of authority that will be in force there. Other sticking points include the amount of Kurdish participation in the central authority and the autonomous region's share of Kirkuk oil.

Regime, Kurds 'Locked' in Talks

NC1105095891 Paris AFP in English 0943 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, May 11 (AFP)—The Iraqi Government and Kurdish leaders on Saturday were still locked in discussions on an autonomy agreement for the Kurds though a "common accord" should be announced shortly, the the pro-government AL-'IRAQ newspaper said.

A key leader of the Kurdish opposition, however, warned that the negotiations had hit snags.

"Some points still need to be resolved," Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK), told Agence France-Presse.

"We'll talk once our discussions are over," he said without elaborating.

A Kurdish delegation led by Mr. Barzani and Iraqi officials opened talks Monday on ways to implement an accord reached in principle last month, which reactivated a 1970 plan for Kurdish autonomy.

The discussions have been "positive", Iraq's official press said on Saturday, with AL-'IRAQ reporting that "the results will be revealed in a few days in the form of a common accord."

Mr. Barzani was absent from last month's talks which were led by Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

Mr. Talabani has been instrumental in seeking application of the 1970 agreement, which called for the creation of an autonomous region of Kurdistan and the recognition of the Kurds' national rights.

The Iraqi Government and Kurdish representatives have apparently failed to agree over the status of Karkuk, the oil-rich town in northern Iraq.

The Kurds want to include it in their autonomous province while the Iraqi Government has said that all subterranean wealth belongs to the central government.

Besides Mr. Barzani, the Kurdish delegation includes Nshirwan Mustafa of the PUK, Rasul Mamand of the Socialist Kurdish Party and Muhammad Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman of the People's Democratic Party of Kurdistan.

The Iraqi delegates are 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice-president of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council, Tariq 'Aziz, the first deputy prime minister, Sa'di Mahdi Salih, the parliamentary leader, and Interior Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid.

Saddam Receives Barzani 11 May

JN1105115991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1152 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—President Saddam Husayn received in his office at noon today Mr. Mas'ud Barzani, head of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan.

Barzani Sees 'Substantial Progress'

NC1205184191 Paris AFP in English 1709 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, May 12 (AFP)—Kurdish rebel leader Mas'ud Barzani said here Sunday "substantial progress" had been made in negotiations with Baghdad on the future of Iraqi Kurdistan.

"We are nearing a final accord," said the leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, adding that the agreement would be announced within days.

The Kurdish opposition and Iraqi government have "crossed an important step on the path to a solution to the Kurdish question that at the same time strengthens the national unity" of Iraq, he said.

Reporting "substantial progress," Mr. Barzani said his meeting Saturday with President Saddam Husayn had been "extremely positive".

"I examined with the president the means to reinforce the fraternal relations between Kurds and Arabs," the rebel leader said in a statement.

He told reporters that Jalal Talabani, another key Kurdish opposition leader, who led a first round of talks with the government, would return to Baghdad "if his presence becomes necessary."

Mr. Barzani said Saturday that a second round of negotiations, which began Monday, had hit snags. "Some points still need to be resolved," he told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE before the meeting with President Husayn.

The talks focus on ways to implement an accord reached in principle last month, which reactivated a 1970 plan for Kurdish autonomy, on the return of Kurdish refugees and democratic reforms.

Assembly To 'Host' Hammadi To Discuss Program

JN1105192191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1850 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—The Iraqi National Assembly will host Prime Minister Sa'dun Hammadi and 10 ministers on Monday to discuss the Council of Ministers' program for the rest of the year.

During its session this evening, the National Assembly decided to host the minister of foreign affairs, the minister of agriculture and irrigation, the minister of trade, the minister of higher education and scientific research, the minister of health, the minister of education, the minister of housing and reconstruction, the minister of transport and communications, the minister of state for oil affairs, and the minister of industry and military industrialization.

The National Assembly also discussed the report submitted by the Iraqi delegation which participated in the International Parliamentary Union's 85th conference held recently in the DPRK.

Hammadi Addresses Assembly

JN1305104191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0944 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—Prime Minister Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi has said that the stand of the countries

of aggression regarding the economic blockade imposed on Iraq is not reassuring. Dr. Hammadi added in a speech delivered to the Iraqi National Assembly today in the presence of a number of ministers that there are indications that these countries will continue their efforts to maintain the economic blockade, hoping to achieve the objectives they could not achieve during the war.

Hammadi noted that Iraq is facing a new stage whose prominent features are the prevalence of law and the normalization of the situation in the wake of the first and second stages of the aggression. He noted that the vigor of this stage is the new constitution and the two new laws for the parties and the press.

The prime minister stressed the government's adherence to the basic principles of expediting development in the public, mixed, and private sectors, curbing inflation and high prices, and ensuring good living standards for everybody.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi affirmed that the current policy of subsidizing prices will continue to encourage national production and to come closer to self-sufficiency. He said that the present formula of subsidizing prices in Iraq takes the form of government commitment to buy specific crops at high prices and to confine the marketing of these crops to the government.

He said that the economic measures that were followed before and during the aggression are overall still valid; they should continue and be strengthened until we are certain that real and continuous progress has been achieved on the ground.

He said: The viable method to tackle the issue of food is to make the material available in the market by increasing the local production and increasing imports according to circumstances.

Delegation Leaves for Cairo Arab League Meetings

JN1305093791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0909 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—Mr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, left for Cairo today heading a delegation to take part in the meetings of the 95th ordinary session of the Arab League Council, which will resume its activity on the ministerial level in Cairo the day after tomorrow, Wednesday [15 May].

During this session, the council will discuss the course of joint Arab action, developments of the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, and U.S. attempts to cancel the UN General Assembly Resolution of 1975, which considers Zionism a form of racism.

The council will also discuss the subject of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to Palestine, the occupied Arab territories, and the occupied Syrian Arab Golan Heights, and will follow up on developments of the Palestinian intifadah, in addition to discussing the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, progress in Arab-African dialogue, liberation movements in southern Africa, and relations between Israel and some African countries.

The delegation accompanying Mr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf includes Wisam al-Zahawi, undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry; Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, director of the Arab Department at the Foreign Ministry; 'Adil al-Mufti, head of the Arab League section at the Ministry, in addition to Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League.

Envoy to UN Delivers Memos Protesting 'Violations'

On Iranian Infiltrations

JN1005201391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1945 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] New York, 10 May (INA)—Iraq's permanent UN representative today informed UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar that an armed band of Iranian infiltrators crossed Iraqi territory in the central sector. They blew up a military camp in Qal'at Husayna on 4 April [placename, date as received].

Four Iranian soldiers were seen the day before yesterday digging a foxhole by border marker no. 50 directly on the international border line in the central sector of Iraq, an Iraqi memorandum to the United Nations said.

An Iranian helicopter was seen flying at medium altitude in front of Iraqi forward positions in the central sector between the areas of Naft Shahr and Khosrovi on the international border.

An estimated 15 individuals were seen building a post directly on the international border line in the Mimak traverse in the central sector. In the meantime, another band was seen building a combat position by border marker no. 98 directly on the international border line in the same sector.

The memorandum stressed that, coupled with past infringements, these fresh violations of the cease-fire agreement between Iraq and Iran confirm deliberate intent on the part of the Iranian Government to compromise Iraq's sovereignty and security.

Iraq reiterates the Iranian Government is responsible for any damage resulting from these violations, the memorandum said.

On Iranian Incursion, Attack

JN1105205991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2029 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] New York, 11 May (INA)—Iraq has blamed Iran for a fresh cease-fire violation, reconfirming a deliberate intent on the part of the Iranian Government to compromise the sovereignty and security of Iraq.

A memorandum sent to UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar by Iraq's permanent UN representative stated

that at 0030 on 4 May a band of three to four [numbers as received] Iranian infiltrators attacked an Iraqi company in the al-Shihabi area between the al-Zayyadi and Tariq police stations in the central sector and captured most of its members.

The memorandum said that, coupled with past Iranian infringements of the cease-fire, the fresh violations underscore the responsibility of the Iranian Government for any consequent damages; it demanded the return of the captured soldiers.

On U.S., Saudi Overflights

JN1205141091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1348 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] New York, 12 May (INA)—Iraq's permanent UN representative informed the UN secretary general today of further violations of Iraqi airspace by American and Saudi planes.

In a memorandum to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, he stated that a formation of two planes carried out one sortie over Iraqi territory on 9-10 May. In a second memorandum today, he stated that American planes carried out three individual sorties on 10 May at 720 km per hour and at low altitude.

He added that the planes came from Turkish territory and flew over Zakho, al-'Imadiyah, and Mosul for purposes of reconnaissance and provocation.

UN Envoy Arrives for Talks on Relief Assistance

JN1105190291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1827 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive envoy of the UN secretary general, arrived here today on an official visit to Iraq lasting several days.

Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's visit is aimed at continuing contacts and exchanging views with the Iraqi Government on extending relief aid within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed between Iraq and the United Nations on 18 April.

Relief Activities To Increase

JN1205090991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0842 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Iraq and the United Nations have agreed to increase relief activities in implementation of the memorandum of understanding signed in Baghdad on 18 April between the Iraqi Government and Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan.

This came in a statement made by Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn during [as received] his meeting with Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive envoy of the UN secretary general for aid and relief affairs, who is currently visiting Iraq.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral cooperation in the field of relief, the return of Kurdish refugees to Iraq, and the provision of humanitarian aid to them to ensure stability in the northern region.

In this regard, the foreign minister affirmed the full readiness of the Iraqi authorities to cooperate with the United Nations to carry out this task.

Aga Khan Visits Al-Muthanna

JN1305101791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0946 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive envoy of the UN secretary general for relief and aid affairs, was briefed on the amount of damage caused by the U.S.-Atlantic aggression on the cities and districts of al-Muthanna Governorate.

During the visit Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan and his delegation made to the Governorate and the meeting with the deputy governor, he heard an explanation of the damage caused by the aggression to the services sectors and industrial installations which led to halting operations and created a shortage in foodstuffs and water purifying chemicals.

Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan affirmed the international organzation's concern to provide foodstuffs for the Iraqi people within the framework of relief and aid.

Possession of Biological Weapons Said 'Probable'

LD1105123591 Prague CTK in English 1040 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] New York May 11 (CTK correspondent)—"It is most probable that Iraq possesses some kind of biological weapons", a Czechoslovak expert on the U.N. ad hoc commission on armistice in the Persian Gulf, has told the CTK correspondent here.

Miroslav Splino, a Czechoslovak expert on biological weapons and member of the 21-member commission, further said that the commission is to submit to the U.N. Security Council its report by May 18. The verification of the deployment of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and their production equipment as well as their liquidation will, however, be a very complicated task requiring much time. Optimists say it will take six to 12 months while pessimists speak about two or even three years, he said. Hundreds of highly qualified experts will have to participate in this process, he said.

Asked about the commission's cooperation with the Iraqi side, the Czechoslovak expert said that cooperation is good on the whole but it remains to be verified to what extent the Iraqi information is reliable and complete.

Reportage on Reaction to Remarks by UK's Major

Minister on British 'Vindictiveness'

JN1105165391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1558 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi has strongly criticized British Prime Minister John Major for the anti-Iraq statements he made yesterday.

Mr. Major said at the British Conservative Party conference in Scotland that Britain is strongly opposed to lifting the economic sanctions on Iraq. He also said that Britain will use the veto in the UN Security Council against any resolution to lift the sanctions as long as President Saddam Husayn remains in power.

In a statement to INA today, Hamid Hammadi said: Facts confirm that Margaret Thatcher is directing John Major and the government in Britain from behind the scenes despite the fact that she was removed from the party's leadership and the premiership.

The culture and information minister asserted that the head of the British Government cannot disobey Thatcher's instructions due to a number of considerations within the Conservative Party despite her allegations that she has become an unemployed and frustrated woman. He said those allegations are designed to cover up the fact that she believes she is still the Iron Lady or the party's godmother.

Hammadi challenged Major and Thatcher to continue to impose the British embargo measures against Iraq. He said: It will not be in the interest of British firms and businessmen at home and abroad to abide by political directives that are based on a personal vendetta and a blind desire for revenge.

He stressed that all justifications for the embargo have been removed with Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and acceptance of UN Security Council resolutions. He said: Any sane or fair person will understand that blind vindictiveness is the only motive behind this British policy.

Hamid Yusuf Hammadi pointed out that this British hatred toward a political system was reflected in the serious actions to harm and take revenge on the Iraqi people and prevent them from importing food and baby's milk, and the requirements for development for more than nine months up to this day. He said: After all this, Britain shamelessly says it will continue to pursue this policy until the regime in Iraq is removed.

He wondered what Major's government will do if the regime and President Saddam Husayn remain in power in Iraq and if this blind policy yields results opposite to what the Conservative government wants.

The minister of culture and information drew the attention of Major and his godmother, Thatcher, to the fact that not a single hair of the Iraqi people will quiver. He said they are silly if they think their position will affect the people of Iraq.

He stressed that this British attitude toward Iraq will fail and added: This policy will add yet another burden to Britain's colonial legacy.

Papers 'Strongly Condemn' Statements

JN1205102191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Iraqi newspapers strongly condemn the statements made by British Prime Minister John Major at the British Conservative Party congress, opposing the lifting of economic sanctions on Iraq.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH terms the British stand as imprudent and foolish, adding that it constitutes a serious precedent in history.

In an editorial published today, the paper stresses that the determination of the British Government, which has a history of deep-seated rancor and hatred toward Iraq and the nation well-known to our great people, to reaffirm and refurbish its previous unfair stands toward our people show vindictiveness aimed at hampering our people's quest for progress. The paper adds that the only explanation for this suspect stand is that the British Government is driven by hatred toward the Iraqi people and that it has a premeditated intention to take revenge on them because of their honorable humanitarian position and their goodwill regarding the desire to achieve peace, make progress, and embark on a reconstruction drive.

The paper goes on to say that the British Government, which professes to be democratic, has nothing to do with democracy, and wonders: Does democracy require it to interfere in the internal affairs of other states and to disregard human rights, since it is disrgarding the rights of our great people as well as the rights of the Palestinian Arab people?

Concluding its editorial, the paper affirms that the ideas Major shamelessly articulated will fail and fall into oblivion, considering that they merely add a new burden to Britain's colonial legacy, a new burden to be borne by the Conservative government, whose days in politics and office are numbered.

The newspaper AL-'IRAQ, in an editorial entitled "Britain, Ingrained Rancor and Hatred," says that Britain's stands reconfirm that there is blind determination to maintain the economic blockade against the Iraqi people and show the immense rancor and hatred Britain harbors toward this lofty people.

The paper adds: The statements recently made by Major confirm that the British policy is deeply involved in the crimes being committed against the Iraqi people through the continuation of the unjust economic blockade

enforced against them. The paper affirms that these statements have not deceived our Iraqi people, who have suffered a great deal as a result of the reckless policy the British pursued against them in the past. Likewise, these statements have failed to deceive others.

The paper goes on to say: These ideas and statements and this position enunciated by Major provide indisputable evidence showing personal animosity against Iraq, its people, its political system, and its great leader Saddam Husayn.

The paper indicates that the Iraqi people, who have become well aware of the facts regarding the British policy and the hostile intentions behind this reckless policy, are now more immune than ever before to such British policies and stands. Their allegiance to struggler President Saddam Husayn has become absolute. As for the statements and ideas enunciated by Major and others, they will fail to make this people change their mind and reverse their allegiance, the paper adds.

Concluding its editorial, AL-'IRAQ affirms that these statements and ideas aired against the Iraqi people are doomed to abject failure, because they are not supported by any legal foundations that justify the maintenance of the economic blockade against an entire people.

AL-QADISIYAH asserts that Major's statements can only be understood within the context of hostility and vindictiveness.

In an editorial today, the paper says that the only clear explanation for these statements, which cannot be mistaken by any objective and fair-minded observer, is that Major is driven by premeditated vindictiveness toward Iraq, its people, and its leadership. This vindictiveness is being manipulated, so it seems, by hatred for the Iraqi leadership and personal animosity toward leader Saddam Husayn, Iraq's historic national and pan-Arab symbol, the paper adds.

AL-QADISIYAH goes on to say: Major is the first one to realise that this explanation is correct and sound. This is because he is fully aware that the unjust and unfair blockade enforced on Iraq for the past nine months constitutes a serious and painful precedent in the history of mankind, a precedent aimed at encroaching on human rights, for which the West allegedly professes respect. This blockade also exposes the double standards the West observes when it tackles issues pertaining to the Arabs, since its conduct in this regard is always displeasing and distasteful.

The paper asserts that this blockade is a disgrace to the world body and the world community. This disgrace will continue to pain the conscience of all mankind until this blockade is finally defeated, the paper adds.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says that the tune to which Major is singing in an attempt to effect a separation between the Iraqi people and their leadership, has become exposed, since it is a political game well known to our people. In fact, Major himself and the entire world know that the Iraqi people and their leadership constitute an indivisible whole that will not be undermined by allegations and blackmail attempts.

Vice President Assails Remarks

JN1205111191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1035 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, member of the Revolution Command Council and vice president, has stated that the threats made by British Prime Minister John Major at the Conservative Party congress are indicative of ingrained malice and evil colonial intentions toward Iraq in particular and the region in general.

In a statement to INA, Ma'ruf added that Iraq, which held out in the face of the imperialist-Atlantic aggression and confronted it with unprecedented valor, will not be intimidated by the statements of Major and his ilk. Likewise, the desperate attempts to weaken the Iraqi people's determination to forge ahead with the reconstruction process to remove the effects of the brute aggression, will not succeed, Ma'ruf said.

Vice President Ma'ruf referred to the evil and premeditated intentions behind these threats and said that they came in the aftermath of encouraging initiatives and signals by international organizations after Iraq and the United Nations had signed an agreement on relief operations and also in the wake of similar signals on other measures expected to be announced on the lifting of the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf affirmed that the Iraqi people now stand united behind their leadership. He added: They are more enthusiastic and aware of the requirements of the current stage in the life of our country than ever before. As for their allegiance to His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, it is nowadays stronger than ever.

'Aziz on 'Evacuees,' Major

JN1205190291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1820 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz has said that Iraq welcomes any UN efforts to solve the problem of the evacuees as soon as possible.

In a statement to INA after this evening's meeting with Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive envoy of the UN secretary general, Mr. 'Aziz said that Iraq has been offering every facility to make this humanitarian mission a success. He added that Iraq, which is cooperating honestly, seriously, and practically with the United Nations to solve this problem, rejects the unjust plans and attempts to exploit the problem of the evacuees for political purposes that will harm Iraq and its people's dignity.

Mr. 'Aziz said these attempts, including the presence of foreign units in areas of Iraq, have hindered rather than helped a solution to the problems of the evacuees. He stressed that Western nations that feign concern for the evacuees must help the mission of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan and provide suitable financial appropriations instead of resorting to methods that harm the sovereignty of Iraq.

The deputy prime minister said the key to solving all the humanitarian problems of the Iraqi people is to lift the economic sanctions. He emphasized that those who insist on keeping sanctions in place must be held mainly responsible for the suffering of the evacuees and the Iraqi people.

He urged the international community to denounce the ill-intentioned positions of these nations. He referred to British Prime Minister John Major as a rancorous colonialist whose position threatens not only Iraqi sovereignty but the principle of the sovereignty and dignity of all peoples of the world.

Meanwhile, Tariq 'Aziz discussed with Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan the UN activity within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed between Iraq and the United Nations 18 April.

Statement Reveals 'Colonialist Mentality'

JN1305082391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0630 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH has denounced the statements made by British Prime Minister John Major on using the veto against any Security Council resolution to lift the economic blockade on Iraq. In an article published today under the headline "Hidden Colonialist Rancor," the paper says: Once again, John Major has displayed the old hatred against the people of Iraq, a disregard for human rights, and an illegitimate inclination to interfere in others' affairs.

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds: John Major's statements on using the veto against any Security Council resolution to lift the economic blockade against Iraq revealed an old and worn-out colonialist mentality. The paper adds that the 30-country aggression against Iraq was a big opportunity which the British [word indistinct] took advantage of to express their hatred of Iraq and its people and to show to what extent the revenge against Iraq complex controls the British political course.

The paper notes that the aggressive British position is revealed and affirms that this loathsome aggressiveness toward Iraq has nothing to do with the reasons given by John Major. These reasons led by the British rule's rancor against Iraq and the leader of Iraq's march and its symbol Saddam Husayn are [words indistinct] rejected.

Concluding, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: The Iraqi people do not find in the bad and evil British stand and others ...[incomplete as received]. They are fully confident that this stand will disappear like many previous stands that exposed the policy of this state, which is governed by a longing for vanished colonialist glories.

Arab Solidarity 'Alternative' to U.S. Presence

JN1105095291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0835 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has stressed that the Bush administration has changed the U.S.-Israeli relationship into a real alliance, something that has rarely occurred between the United States and any other country in the world.

In an article published today under the headline "How the Bush Administration Views the Middle East," the paper says: Due to their state of affairs, the Arabs were unable to halt the growth of this alliance. In the Bush era, the U.S. concern is no longer to ensure Israel's security, but also to secure its economic prosperity.

The paper explains that in the Bush era, Israel has the power to force the President of the United States to go back on official promises he made to several Arab states on providing them with weapons and military equipment needed to enhance their defense capabilities after the Gulf war.

The paper points out that the danger of the U.S.-Israeli alliance lies in its having brought about radical changes in the U.S. view of the Arab region and its relationship with the Arab world in general.

The paper adds that the Bush administration is now influenced more than any of its predecessors by its strong relations with Israel in its dealings with Arab countries, even friendly ones, as though U.S.-Arab relations could not grow independent of the influence of the U.S.-Israeli alliance.

The paper asserts that the Bush administration now acts on the basis that the United States can maintain normal, good, or strong relations with most Arab countries without resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and without applying pressure on Israel to find a just, comprehensive solution to the Palestine question.

Moreover, the paper stresses that the Bush administration acts on the basis that the Arabs in general need the United States more than it needs them, whether with regard to bilateral relations, regional conflicts, or other fields.

The paper concludes by saying that the real alternative to the United States in the Middle East is genuine Arab solidarity, and action and movement on the basis of a single front. Otherwise, the Arabs will not only lose their influence and position in one country or another, but they might lose more than that, and probably lose the Middle East itself.

Citizens 'Determined' To Abort U.S. 'Plots'

JN1305075291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0615 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has affirmed that the plots and schemes concocted by the imperialist quarters and some neighboring countries will merely act as a strong motive for the people of Iraq to further adhere to their principles and to the lofty values they have inherited over the centuries. In today's editorial, AL-QADISIYAH strongly attacks the United States and Britain for inventing new methods to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs and to send their forces and the allies' forces to northern Iraq to obstruct the return of the Iraqi Kurdish citizens to their cities and villages under the pretext of ensuring protection and security.

AL-QADISIYAH says: All this is taking place despite Iraq's constant and organized efforts to provide the requirements and means of normal life and living conditions for the Kurds in cooperation and coordination with humanitarian and international committees and organizations. The paper questions the benefit of the refugee camps through which America justifies its presence in northern Iraq since the Iraqi Government took the initiative in a practical and tangible way to facilitate the return of normal life for the Kurds after they had been exposed to looting.

The Iraqi paper adds that this is an American innovation taken from files in the CIA offices. This innovation shows the pressing desire of the United States to extend its colonialist octopus to the Iraqi territory which is part of the Arab region that is rich in resources.

AL-QADISIYAH affirms that the new measures witnessed by Iraq's internal front to restore normal life to Iraq and to rebuild what was destroyed by the aggression—in a way that corresponds with the great sacrifices made by the people of Iraq and its righteous sons—assert that the sons of Iraq are determined to continue to exist and are capable of bypassing difficulties.

The paper says that when the Iraqis confront any of the evil intentions and schemes—today or tomorrow—they in fact embody the genuine civilization recorded in their history.

Concluding, AL-QADISIYAH says: The masses' rally around their symbol, leader Saddam Husayn, and the deep crucial association between the leader and the masses is a vital factor of the Iraqis' determination to foil and topple the conspiratorial schemes. And the march of construction and national solidarity will continue in Iraq.

Paper Notes 'Conformity' in U.S.-Iranian Relations

JN1305095391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0700 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—AL-'IRAQ newspaper publishes an article in which it notes the practical conformity and stability in U.S.-Iranian relations since February 1979 when Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was toppled. The paper says in the article published today that the elements of convergence are far more than the causes of contradiction, whose arena was only in the media, and which became clearer at the beginning of the Gulf crisis and the outbreak of the war of the 30 countries against Iraq. This required the production of new slogans to the ones that were worn out in the previous stage such as the great Satan, U.S. imperialism, the number one enemy, and other slogans. And the slogan of Iran's position in the new security order in the region replaces those worn out slogans within Iran's endeavor to have a special position in the new world order when the issue is related to the Gulf area.

AL-'IRAQ notes that Iran rapidly resorted to accompanying and associated practices, including political and military escalation against Iraq, which reached the level of blatant interference in its internal affairs. The political and information stand was in harmony with the U.S.-Western program which is hostile to Iraq and with the same tune played by Washington.

Concluding, AL-'IRAQ notes that the Iranian quarters—whether through 'Ali Khamene'i or President Hashemi-Rafsanjani—have shown clear readiness to return to play the role of regional policeman. Within this framework, the Iranian contacts and moves have been exposed while searching for methods that would greatly harm Iraq to prove Tehran's faithfulness to its new and old position in the U.S. game.

'Confessing' Prisoner Describes Iranian Role

JN1205184991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1807 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—An Iranian prisoner has confirmed the facts of the Iranian regime's involvement in acts of sabotage in Iraqi cities and governorates.

Confessing on Baghdad television last night, 'Ali Waqi'i, from the city of Qom, said that he had received, along with the groups of the so-called "Imam 'Ali" division, extensive training in the Abu-Dharr camp, 80 km from the Iranian city of Bakhtaran, and that the training included the use of weapons and methods of sabotage and fighting in cities.

He said his group traveled along unpaved roads to assemble near the city of Klar in the Diyala Governorate east of Central Iraq from where they were moved in formations of 40 to 50 personnel to the outskirts of the city of Jalula' on the highway linking Iraq and Iran to carry out acts of sabotage there.

Prisoner 'Ali Waqi'i said that the Iranian authorities supplied the saboteurs with all kinds of weapons and combat and sabotage equipment that even included tanks and (?RPG-7). He said the groups of saboteurs were replaced by other groups after each armed confrontation inside Iraq in order to reorganize in the Iranian camp in preparation for further operations.

UN Relief Mission Inspects Damage in Maysan

JN1205103691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0945 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Yesterday, a UN relief mission acquainted itself with the damage caused to service, health, and educational facilities and also to residential areas in the Maysan Governorate by the 30-state aggression.

The mission listened to a briefing by the Maysan governor on the efforts currently under way to reconstruct what the aggressive war has destroyed.

The mission, which comprises representatives of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, UNICEF, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, visited the governorate to gain firsthand knowledge of the governorate's requirements of foodstuffs and medical appliances.

Opposition Radio Claims Saudis Shoot Refugees

LD1005192691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1830 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] The Voice of Revolutionary Iraq says that Saudi soldiers have killed and wounded a group of Iraqis who had taken refuge in Saudi Arabia. According to this report, the incident occurred in the city Rafha after the refugees tried to get some water. The report says the Saudi soldiers opened fire on the Iraqi refugees, killing and wounding several of them.

Reportage on Bessmertnykh Visit, Reactions

Agreement To Stay in 'Constant Touch'

TA1005114891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1117 GMT 10 May 91

[Statement by Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh following his meeting with Foreign Minister Levi at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem—live in English; monitored in progress]

[Text] [Bessmertnykh] ...addressed the issues that helped me very much to understand better the positions of Israel. The atmosphere was very good, and we have agreed to continue the talks and stay in constant touch on the issues, using every means possible to talk and meet, so that we can, together with Israel and other countries, move in the direction we all wish, and that is the peaceful settlement of all the issues that trouble the region. Thank you very much.

Levi Calls Talks 'Profound, Candid'

TA1005120091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1119 GMT 10 May 91

[Statement by Foreign Minister David Levi at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem—live]

[Text] I endorse what Mr. Bessmertnykh said. The atmosphere of the talks was good. The discussions of all the topics were profound and candid. I believe there is currently understanding on the various issues and that direct personal contacts have been established. We decided to sustain these direct ties as the best option, which is both warranted and essential in every situation.

Israel's position on all the subjects is now clear. Of course, there still remain questions that we will have to debate and resolve. On the one hand, there are the Arab countries. Clearly peace should be comprehensive. Clearly, as far as I can say, this meeting was warranted.

As I had imagined, I encountered an open-minded person with broad vision, the desire to listen, and a strong urge to cooperate in solving problems and promoting peace. I think that he is now convinced that Israel's desire for peace is strong.

I am pleased that I had this opportunity. I will not go into any specific issue, but I will say that the discussions were fertile and good, that they should continue, and that it is necessary to resolve several problems and influence other elements as well so that this region knows no more wars.

Details on Levi, Bessmertnykh Meeting

TA1005130391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1235 GMT 10 May 91

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan from the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem—live]

[Text] I have initial details about the meeting between Foreign Minister David Levi and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, held before the current meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

Participants in this meeting said the important points were the ones that were not raised in the Levi-Bessmertnykh meeting. Neither the issue of territories, nor the issue of settlement, nor that of the Jews' departure from the Soviet Union arose in this meeting. Bessmertnykh talked about the participation of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, in the political process. He also talked about the participation of Europe and the United Nations in the regional conference. This is what Bessmertnykh raised.

His Israeli interlocutors, Foreign Minister Levi and his associates, answered that Israel demands direct negotiations and that the Arabs must not be allowed to evade such negotiations through the convening of an international conference. They expressed total opposition to the convening of an international conference.

The atmosphere in the meeting between Levi and Bessmertnykh was defined as relaxed; and the news is that relations between Israel and the USSR will be renewed shortly. This was stated by Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh, who added that this is a natural and unavoidable process. Relations then will be resumed—and resumed shortly—according to the Soviet foreign minister's promise.

Pazner Comments on Talks

TA1005141791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1320 GMT 10 May 91

[Interview with Avi Pazner, the prime minister's media adviser, by political correspondent Arye Golan, following the meeting between Prime Minister Shamir and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh; outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem—live]

[Text] [Golan] Good day to you, Mr. Pazner.

[Pazner] Good day to you. We had a very long talk with Soviet Foreign Minister Mr. Bessmertnykh. The talk was initially a tete-a-tete between the prime minister and the Soviet foreign minister. This part lasted about 30 minutes. Later, the two delegations convened for a talk which lasted about 75 minutes and touched upon many issues, including the peace process and bilateral relations. The talk was conducted in a good atmosphere and was defined by our Soviet colleagues as effective and constructive.

[Golan] Does Mr. Shamir know now when full diplomatic relations with the USSR will resume?

[Pazner] On the basis of the talks with the Soviet foreign minister, it seems to us that the process we find ourselves in is leading to that point. It is clear to us, from the good atmosphere of the talks and their content, that both the Soviets and ourselves are on the right path, that we are

moving in the right direction. When this will happen exactly, though, is difficult to tell.

[Golan] Could you, sir, specify the agreements, if agreements were indeed reached, in the talks held here between Mr. Shamir and his associates and Mr. Bessmertnykh and his associates?

[Pazner] The agreement is a general one, on the need to advance toward peace. This is a general agreement, an important agreement between two countries such as the Soviet Union and Israel. Each of the sides explained its outlook as to how this should be done. Mr. Shamir elaborated on Israel's positions, and it is not necessary for me to repeat them to you. Mr. Bessmertnykh asked questions, made a few observations, and the general impression is that he showed a great deal of interest in the positions he heard.

[Golan] Did he also comment on the problematic issues that he mentioned during his appearance with King Husayn in Jordan, such as the settlement issue and limiting the emigration of Jews from the USSR?

[Pazner] No, on the contrary. On the issue of aliyah he clearly emphasized that aliyah from the Soviet Union to Israel will continue. This is a Soviet policy which is derived from the process of democratization in that country and has nothing to do with any other problem. Mr. Shamir profusely thanked the Soviet authorities for allowing Jews to leave for Israel in increasingly greater numbers for nearly two years now.

[Golan] Did the settlement issue not arise?

[Pazner] This issue did not arise during the talks with the delegation in which I participated.

[Golan] Thank you, Mr. Pazner. Let me add that during their talks Prime Minisater Shamir mentioned to the Soviet foreign minister the USSR's great contribution to the foundation of the State of Israel. He mentioned the fact that the Soviet Union and its UN representative had voted for the partition resolution on 29 November 1947. Mr. Shamir told Bessmertnykh: You made an important contribution to the establishment of the State of Israel, and now you help us by sending Jewish immigrants from the USSR to Israel. Mr. Bessmertnykh replied: I am happy about this. This is a general Soviet policy, to allow freedom of exit to whoever wishes. There is no problem about this.

Netanyahu Views Talks

TA1005133591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1240 GMT 10 May 91

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Hayim Zissowitz and political correspondent Arye Golan]

[Text] [Zissowitz] Good day, Deputy Foreign Minister Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good day.

[Zissowitz] Our political correspondent Arye Golan will also take part in the conversation from the broadcasting van outside the minister's office in Jerusalem.

Mr. Deputy Foreign Minister, you took part in the meeting with the Soviet foreign minister. I would first of all like you to comment on the issues that were not raised during the meeting, including the two very sensitive points, which were made even more sensitive following Bessmertnykh's statements in Amman about the settlements. Those statements were interpreted in Israel as a possible threat to stop immigration from the Soviet Union. Why did the Israeli side prefer not to raise this issue during today's meeting?

[Netanyahu] First of all, I do not want to discuss the content of the talks. They are still going on and have not been concluded. As you know, Minister Bessmertnykh is currently meeting with the prime minister. So for one thing, I do not make it my business to issue details of talks, and for another, the talks are still under way.

As for your question, I believe that our position on aliyah is clear. I also believe that no Soviet government—not the present one nor any government in the future—would make the mistake and fall back on this most important step that was taken by the USSR. The liberalization in the emigration of Soviet Jewry was and is the barometer of reforms in human rights and in the democratization of the Soviet Union. Going back on this would constitute pushing perestroyka backwards. The consequences of this would be so far-reaching that I am very doubtful that any Soviet Government would take such a step.

[Golan] Deputy Minister Netanyahu, considering the course of the talks until now and the unequivocal and well-known demand—without going into the contents of the talks that were held—on the inclusion of the superpowers, Europe, and especially of the United Nations in the regional meeting; in light of Israel's categorical rejection of UN participation, is there anything to talk about with the Soviets on this issue?

[Netanyahu] There is a lot to discuss with the Soviets. Our opposition to UN participation is only one facet of our position. We have also expressed our readiness to launch a political process, which includes even what I would call Israeli concessions, such as the regional meeting and the readiness to incorporate the Soviet Union in the meeting—which of course would not have been included in such contacts in the past. Israel is therefore exerting efforts to get the process going.

We talk to the Soviet Union. We just discussed with their foreign minister a whole series of issues relevant to such a beginning. There are problems, but there are also agreements. I will not elaborate; but if you ask me whether we have anything to discuss with the Soviet Union, then the answer is yes. We certainly have a lot to talk about, we have a hiatus of decades to make up, decades in which there was a complete break between Israel and the Soviet

Union. I am convinced that this is just as much in the interests of the Soviet Union as it is in Israel's interests.

[Golan] Now, relations with Israel will apparently not be renewed during this visit. Is this not actually a lever by which to convince Israel, let us say, to stop the construction drive in the territories for the duration of the international conference or for as long as the political process is going on? Does this not really constitute a signal? After all, he said that relations would be renewed shortly; he did not say that they would be resumed now or tomorrow evening?

[Netanyahu] I think that the very fact that the visit took place is the strongest possible signal imaginable—the very fact that a Soviet foreign minister has arrived in Israel after over 40 years. The fact that he is here and holding talks with Israel's leaders, that he is speaking about—and I will add nothing—renewing diplomatic relations in the near future, and the fact that he did not make these relations conditional on anything.... [changes thought] I think that we should leave the matter of the date to when the Soviet Union considers it time. Israel will accept the Soviet Union's choice of a date. We were not the ones to break relations, and the decision on when to resume them is therefore theirs to make. I am convinced that the resumption of relations is no less in the interest of the Soviet Union than it is for Israel. Therefore, we are not rushing them. They are very well aware of their interests themselves.

[Golan] What would you say is now closer, a wider international conference—let us say including Syria—or the more limited conference currently under consideration with Jordan, the Palestinians, and Israel?

[Netanyahu] I do not deal in guesswork. We made an offer that remains valid. If the Arabs want to respond to our proposal, abandon their historically inflexible positions, and sit down to negotiations, they can do that. If Syria decides to join the process, it will be welcome. If it decides to stay at home and Jordan comes by itself, that is fine with us as well. I think that what matters today are not these visits, despite all the great importance that must be attached to them—for example, the Soviet foreign minister's visit, the impending visit of U.S. Secretary of State Baker, and the visits of European ministers. The visit by the Soviet minister is important in the context of our bilateral relations, and also in connection with the peace process in the Middle East. Nevertheless, the most important visits which would really constitute breakthroughs in the political process are by Arabs. Let the Arab leaders come to talk to Israel. Let them come to Jerusalem or to any other place in which we could sit down to launch a political process. That is the step that is needed now, and this is something we are not seeing.

[Zissowitz] Deputy Minister Netanyahu, before we thank you, let me ask you one more question. Was our foreign minister also invited to visit the Soviet Union?

[Netanyahu] Once more, I would not like to discuss the details of the talks. I suggest we wait for additional statements at the end of the trip.

[Zissowitz] Thank you, Mr. Netanyahu.

Levi, Bessmertnykh Hold News Conference

TA1005144291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1348 GMT 10 May 91

[News conference by Foreign Minister David Levi and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh at Ben-Gurion Airport, at the conclusion of Bessmertnykh's visit to Israel; Bessmertnykh's remarks in Russian with superimposed Hebrew translation—live]

[Text] [Israel television correspondent Yig'al Goren] Mr. Minister, when does the Soviet Union plan to reestablish full diplomatic relations with Israel?

[Bessmertnykh] I have already said earlier...

[Levi, interrupting] Explain that there is an English translation.

[Bessmertnykh] ...We could point out the fact that relations between the Soviet Union and Israel have developed very positively. We have established contacts, we share joint projects that we are currently implementing. What is interesting is the fact that relations are developing in various fields.

Judging by the number of joint projects, our two countries are not lagging behind other countries. On the contrary, relations between our countries are more developed than relations between other states. This is true in the economic, scientific, and technological sense. Of course, the potential exists to develop our links further; and we are very close to the resumption of diplomatic relations, which will constitute the jewel in the crown.

[Unidentified correspondent, in English] In Syria and Jordan, and now in Israel, and before your meeting in Cairo with Secretary of State Baker, do you see any breakthrough in the peace efforts in the area?

[Bessmertnykh] I have been eagerly anticipating my trip to the region, and I have thought deeply of the possibilities of furthering the peace process. I am aware of the positions held by leaders in the area; it is the personal contacts which are most important, however. These contacts permit me to conclude that the chances of achieving peace in the region and furthering the negotiation process that will lead to peace are good. The chances are now good as a result of the changes that have taken place in the world and in this region. Perceptions and positions have changed in the region as well as in the countries you mentioned. The intention now is that the superpowers, especially the Soviet Union and the United States, will assist in launching negotiations. Therefore, I hope—although this hope has still not been fully realized—that our relations with the countries and peoples

of the region as well as with the United States will help us proceed with the negotiations.

[Goren] Foreign Minister Levi, I wanted to ask if, following the round of talks with the Soviet foreign minister, you had received clarifications on reports from the Arab countries in which he was quoted as linking emigration from the Soviet Union with settlement or with the peace process in general?

[Levi] I would like to request that statements not be tailored to create disagreement. During our talks, there were neither hints nor pressure, nor threats, nor anything remotely like that. We spoke as representatives of free countries seeking common ground on which to work together out of total freedom of choice. Peace is more in Israel's interest than in anyone else's. If the Arab side is interested in peace, it will find Israel with an outstretched hand.

I must say that the atmosphere during our talks was more than collegial; it was friendly! There were no threats or various hints, and there is no need to try and portray things in that way. We are determined to improve our relations and to strengthen contacts between our two countries. We shall coordinate matters and seek solutions together as free countries that share a common goal.

[Golan] Can one say, therefore, that the path has been paved for the Soviet Union's full participation in the political process?

[Levi] We have stated from the very inception of the process that Israel does not rule out the participation of the Soviet Union. There are things that we are formulating together so that the principles will be consolidated and coordinated. That is exactly what we are doing, and I hope it is to our mutual satisfaction.

[Israel television Arabic correspondent Shlomo Ganor] Mr. Levi, has the Soviet foreign minister's visit opened the door to active Soviet involvement in the Middle East?

[Levi] Whoever thinks he can remove the Soviet Union from the Middle East is an enemy of the Soviet Union. Whoever thinks the Soviet Union will fulfill a role that will lead to war in the Middle East is an enemy of peace. The Soviet Union is working to achieve peace, to convince, and to contribute to that end, something that Israel gladly welcomes.

[Ganor] Mr. Levi, following the Soviet foreign minister's talks in Jordan, have you received the impression that Jordan will assume an active role in the political process and participate in a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation?

[Levi] We hope so. That is our position, and I am now expressing it. We hope that all the Arab countries will participate in the peace process. A situation in which some of them say yes while others maintain that a state of continuous war against Israel is untenable. I was asked this morning by my colleague whether Israel was in favor of all the Arab countries participating, and my answer was that Israel is indeed interested in having all the Arab countries in the region play a role in the peace process. This is a question of effort and of future work, but this is the direction.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Foreign Minister, you said that a channel of communications has been opened in our relations with the Soviet Union. Have you decided on any kind of mechanism to pursue this process?

[Levi] The mechanism is simple, and there is nothing better than a simple answer. There is a direct connection between the two foreign ministries, and there is a direct relationship between the Soviet foreign minister and me. We can exchange impressions and consult one another, receive updates, and seek solutions.

[Unidentified correspondent in English] Mr. Bessmertnykh, do you see any kind of linkage between the continuation of the settlements in the occupied territories and the immigration of Russian Jews to Israel?

[Bessmertnykh] I agree that there is no country or people not worried by what is happening in this region. Everyone must make every possible effort for peace. I think there is no country in the Middle East that could remain indifferent in the search for ways to launch a dialogue between the sides that would lead to peace. As for the specific aspects, such as what parties might participate and how the negotiations might develop—well, these issues must yet be discussed, and we have started debating them, and I believe that we will continue. I hope that a solution acceptable to all sides will be found.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Bessmertnykh, does the Soviet Union intend to limit the emigration of Soviet Jews in order to force Israel to make concessions?

[Bessmertnykh] I would like to say that all the participants in the talks, all those that I spoke with during this tour—the leader of Israel, the foreign minister—we agreed that no country should exert pressure or attempt to force anything upon any other country. There should be no pressure, because this process will only bear fruit when we all wish to achieve the goals we have set ourselves. As for the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, this process is a result of the democratization in our country, in both internal and external matters.

By the way, the emigration from the Soviet Union is not only to Israel, but also to other countries and all the places our citizens wish to live. I believe that those Soviet citizens who come to live in Israel deserve to live in peace and comfort, and I think that they can be sure that when a comprehensive agreement is reached things will indeed take a turn for the better.

[Unidentified correspondent in English] Did you deliberately refrain from using the words international or regional when mentioning the peace conference? Was there a reason for this?

[Bessmertnykh] Currently we are working on a mode of negotiations that would be acceptable to all the parties. As you know, there are several ways to go about this. Generally, I just like the idea of a peace conference rather than any other name, because the word that I heard very often here in Israel was peace, and therefore I think that the term peace conference can satisfy all the parties. As far as I am concerned that is the best approach, but that, of course, does not mean that all the participants will agree.

[Correspondent from Jewish newspaper in Moscow, in Russian with superimposed translation into Hebrew] Currently the practice is that those who leave Moscow lose their citizenship; however, there are those who would like to preserve their Soviet citizenship, and there is always the possibility of holding dual citizenship—what do you think of that?

[Bessmertnykh] My personal opinion on the matter is that this question is worthy of serious consideration. This matter should be resolved in an objective manner. It is currently being taken care of, and I hope it will be resolved in such a way that our countrymen leaving for Israel will not feel discriminated against.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Bessmertnykh, are you aware of the fact that during the recent war Israel was hit by a barrage of missiles that were supplied by Moscow? We have also heard that the Soviets have supplied weapons to Syria. Has not the time come to change this situation?

[Bessmertnykh] The question of arms in this region is an issue of increasing importance. I can tell you that this aspect was also discussed during my meetings with the foreign minister and with the prime minister. I believe that this area has the right to ask us to consider the issue of arms supervision. We want this issue to be resolved. We understand that in the absence of peace, in the absence of agreement, and in the absence of a comprehensive peace agreement, this region will again become a focus for an arms race. Therefore, both those on the supplying end and those on the receiving end should take another look at the situation, because stability and peace are our goals, and these do not conform with an arms race. After all, weapons are dangerous to everyone, to all the countries and peoples in the Middle East.

Bessmertnykh 'Pleased' With Talks

TA1005150891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1348 GMT 10 May 91

[Statement by Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh before joint news conference with Foreign Minister David Levi at Ben-Gurion Airport—live, in Russian, with superimposed Hebrew translation; interpreter's translation broadcast in progress]

[Text] ....that you accorded me during my short visit to Israel. The just-concluded visit is the first visit to Israel [by a Soviet foreign minister] throughout its years of existence. Therefore, this visit is an important stage in the development of relations between Israel and the Soviet Union. The talks that I held with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and Foreign Minister Mr. Levi mostly concerned two aspects, two spheres. The first sphere concerns the situation that has developed in the Middle East region, the existing opportunities that will help the search for the process of settling the problems here. In this context, we did not just discuss the conceptual positions of the two sides. We did not just examine the general outline of the positions that are agreeable to both of us; we also discussed the practical aspects connected to a peace conference, which is the idea being discussed intensively everywhere now.

It seems to me that the discussions we had were very useful, were friendly and candid, and gave us the opportunity of improving mutual understanding. We also decided to continue to maintain intensive contacts between the two countries, the two governments, and the two foreign ministers. We will keep in touch then, and [passage indistinct]. Regarding bilateral relations, we noted that relations between us have developed well and successfully, but there is a certain potential here that has not been exhausted yet. Opportunities that we will have to take advantage of (?have been created). To sum up my brief remarks, I would like to say that I am quite pleased with the talks we held here. The points on which we agree are clearer to me, as are the points on which we do not think alike. In any event, we made the first steps, and we will continue future relations in a more successful manner.

Levi Comments at Airport

TA1005162791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1348 GMT 10 May 91

[Statement by Foreign Minister David Levi during joint news conference with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh at Ben-Gurion Airport—live]

[Text] I am very happy that we were able to talk face to face, to discuss and clarify problems, and to understand each other. There are several spheres in which we can say that not only did the positions become clearer but that there are also now understandings. There are also additional points that we will have to discuss together and to which we will have to find solutions. The very fact of an overall outlook and aim of an overall peace, as well as the path to direct negotiations, is an historic step forward. We welcome the Soviet Union here as a guest, as a superpower, and its foreign minister as a person who has increasingly impressed us as being an open-minded man, with a very broad outlook on the entire region as well as a willingness to seek a path and solutions together. Israel's aspiration for peace is more concrete, and directly so, than ever before, as was expressed in our talks and in the efforts that Israel has made in order to promote the peace process.

I am glad we were able to form this open dialogue, this open channel for direct updates and consultations, as agreed upon. This will surely contribute to advancing peace in the region, which is the key goal of the Israeli Government's policy. I am very glad about our meeting, about the atmosphere that prevailed during the meeting, and the inner conviction that we will strive and make an effort to find solutions together, in a free manner, without coercion, through mutual persuasion and with a mutual eye for the goal: peace. I am grateful to the Soviet foreign minister for the contribution he made to this atmosphere.

Visit Tests Kremlin's 'True Intentions'

JN1005170391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1338 GMT 10 May 91

["Observation" by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] Dear listeners: The significance of Aleksandr Bessmertnykh's visit to Israel today does not only lie in the fact that it is the first official visit by a Soviet foreign minister to Israel since its establishment. The significance of the visit also derives from the timing and overall context. The visit is part of a Middle East tour whose declared prime objective is to contribute to the Middle East peace process. Moreover, the visit coincides with a parallel visit to the Middle East that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will make for the same purpose.

When it is said that there is a historic opportunity now available for the establishment of peace in our region, there are undoubtedly factors that lend credibility to such an argument or belief. This is because this is the first time that practical steps are taken in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict that show the existence of understanding, coooperation, and coordination between the United States and the USSR within the framework of international endeavors to achieve peace in the Middle East.

It is to be recalled that both Washington and Moscow have stated in no uncertain terms that it is unrealistic to demand the imposition of solutions or peace formulas on any party. This is because true peace cannot be imposed by force. Indeed, true peace has to be attained through the exercise of free will, based on a sincere desire to achieve it. There is no doubt that Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh's visit to our region entails a double test. For one, it puts to the test the Kremlin's true intentions toward the cause of peace in our region. The tour will show whether or not the Kremlin has abandoned once and for all the policy of fishing in troubled waters with the aim of maintaining the status of no war-no peace in the Middle East. The reference here is to a policy that the Kremlin pursued in the decades preceding Gorbachev's era, thinking that it was the best policy to reinforce Soviet influence in the Arab homeland and serve its world strategy. Second, Bessmertnykh's tour will also put to the test the USSR's ability to influence its Arab clients, particularly Syria. To be more specific, the tour will show how successful the USSR will be in making its Arab clients, especially Syria, change their intransigence.

As for Secretary of State Baker, he has thus far failed to achieve this objective in his three previous visits to our region, and most recently, in 10 hours of intensive talks with Syrian officials in Damascus during his last one.

Gaza Notable Comments

TA1005172791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Interviewed by our correspondent Kayid Zahir, many West Bank and Gaza Strip dignitaries expressed the hope that the Soviet foreign minister's visit to the region will lead to advancing the peace process.

Attorney Fayiz Abu-Rahmah told our correspondent that the Soviet minister's visit contributed a lot toward reaching a peaceful settlement, particularly since the visit is special in that it is the first of its kind since the establishment of the State of Israel. On his own behalf and on behalf of the Gaza Strip notables, Mr. Abu-Rahmah expressed the hope that the Soviet minister will return to the country on a longer visit so that the Palestinian dignitaries will have the opportunity to meet with him to discuss the Soviet Union's active role in the peace process in the region.

Levi Proposes 'Nonbelligerency' Pact

TA1005180891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Israel is prepared to offer a nonbelligerency accord to all Arab countries. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that this is one of the remarks Foreign Minister David Levi made this afternoon to his guest, Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh.

Minister Levi told his guest that Syria is continuing to arm itself and to talk of strategic parity with Israel, and that Jerusalem has not yet heard anything positive from Syria. Bessmertnykh answered that Israel's fear of the Arab countries' military buildup is understandable, but that these countries are also afraid of Israel's military power.

On the peace conference, Bessmertnykh said that Moscow is not asking for a conference that will be coercive and make decisions. Levi and Bessmertnykh did not discuss the question of the nature of the conference or whether it will be a one-time conference, a continuing one, or one which convenes occasionally.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew at 1715 GMT on 10 May, in a report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Halperin adds: "It emerges from today's talks that there is almost complete coordination between James Baker and Aleksandr Bessmertnykh; the Soviets do not deviate from the line adopted by the Americans.

["The matter of settlements did not arise in today's talks, at least not during the advisers' extensive deliberations. The Soviets did not talk about the PLO or about the East Jerusalem Arabs.

["Bessmertnykh noted that the peace conference is not the international conference that the Soviet Union advocated in the past, and that it is not coercive or a decisionmaking conference, as agreed with Baker. The format should be agreeable to both sides, with the goal being direct, two-track negotiations. Still, like the Americans, the Soviets favor the possibility of a continuing conference and the participation of a representative of the UN secretary general. The prime minister rejected these two possibilities.

["As for diplomatic relations, Bessmertnykh said this is a natural process and will take place. David Levi said that upgrading the level of relations should not be made conditional on progress in this process."]

Bessmertnykh Proposal Detailed

TA1105075891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpt] Our correspondent in Cairo Aharon Barne'a reports that senior diplomatic sources say that Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh showed Israeli leaders the Soviet plan for peace and he is now presenting exactly the same proposals in Cairo.

According to the Soviet plan, the basis for convening the peace conference would be to discuss the principle of territory for peace and the UN resolutions stipulating that the Palestinian people have the full right to establish an independent state. In return, the Soviet Union would be willing to convince all the Arab countries to discuss security issues with Israel as well as developing political and economic ties. All of this would be on the condition that Israel promises to accept the Soviet demands.

Bessmertnykh wishes to hear the opinion of the Egyptian leaders regarding the idea of quickly launching negotiations in Cairo in the second half of May, through a meeting between the Israeli foreign minister and the foreign ministers of the Arab states sharing borders with Israel. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss the peace conference agenda and the parties that would participate.

Envoy in Moscow on Visit, Ties

TA1105094091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0805 GMT 11 May 91

[Studio interview with Arye Levin, the Israeli consul general in Moscow, by Dov Gilhar and political correspondent Natan Gutman on the weekly "In the Current Situation" program—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Gilhar] We have two guests in our Jerusalem studio. One of them is Arye Levin, the Israeli consul general in the Soviet Union. Good day Mr. Levin.

[Levin] Good day.

[Gilhar] And a good morning to our political correspondent Natan Gutman.

[Gutman] Good morning.

[Gilhar] Consul General Levin, are we very disappointed or were we perhaps not actually expecting the resumption of diplomatic relations?

[Levin] I do not think we are disappointed. The trip more or less tallied with our expectations. He [Bessmertnykh] may have been more open and friendly in a certain sense than we anticipated; however, there were certainly no great surprises—including the issue of diplomatic relations that we did not expect to see resumed on this occasion.

[Gilhar] In that case, what were the achievements of this visit? What did Israel directly gain, aside from the historic significance of the visit itself?

[Levin] Well, the historic significance undoubtedly constitutes an achievement in itself. One must not forget the huge abyss between Israel and the Soviet Union, or at least the great divide that Israel and the Soviet Union, or Israel at least, had to cross over the last two or three years. This is a very long way and we have today reached a point that can only culminate in the resumption of relations and full normalization of the ties between the two countries. Therefore, this in itself is a very important, interesting, and encouraging step. As for the other two things you mentioned: one question was what did Israel achieve?

[Gilhar] The benefits.

[Levin] That is the benefit and it is a great one. A great improvement in relations that eventually translates into great benefits for Israel and its standing in the international community. As for progress in the peace process, well, the peace process will take place sooner or later, in one form or another. I think that what happened today [10 May] contitutes the beginning of a much more active role for the Soviet Union in the process than in the past. I think that the foreign minister's statements emphasizing this at the last news conference at the airport only serve to underscore and confirm this fact.

[Gilhar] Consul General Levin, going back for one moment to bilateral relations between Israel and the Soviet Union: Bessmertnykh spoke of a potential that has still to be realized, or in other words of the upgrading of relations to embassy level. Do you think that can still happen during the next few days, while Bessmertnykh is still touring the region?

[Levin] I would advise taking this matter a bit more slowly. It may or may not happen so quickly. We are a country with a certain amount of pride and we do not need to run after this. After all, it will happen. It could come in a week or in another month or two. Bessmertnykh stressed that we are very close to completing the

process. Very close is a term that is subject to interpretation. I believe that it is close, or in other words, a few weeks, or at the most several months away. However, there is no doubt that if the Soviet Union really wants to play a role in the political process—and Moscow, Washington, and all of us understand this—it must assume the role of honest broker according to what is customary in international relations.

[passage omitted] [Gilhar] At the time, Israel placed two conditions for Soviet participation in the regional conference. One condition was the resumption of diplomatic relations, which has not taken place. The second condition was Soviet acceptance of the principles agreed upon between Israel and the United States regarding the modalities of the regional conference. Has there been any progress on these issues?

[Levin] I think so.

[Gilhar] Does the Soviet Union accept these conditions?

[Levin] No. You mentioned earlier the matter of the international conference. Today the issue of the international conference is not even on the agenda. The Soviets today speak of a peace conference. Peace conference is a much more general term and each party can attach whatever meaning it desires to it...

[Gutman, interrupting] Perhaps that is actually the problem?

[Levin] No, I think that the Soviets understand quite well—and this is how it appeared to us during the talks—that they cannot force anything on Israel, nor do they have any intention of doing so. They realize that they cannot force Israel to accept a framework that is considered undesirable by Jerusalem. Therefore, first of all, there will be no international conference. That is number one. Number two: they can call any regional meeting whatever they want to; we will stick to our interpretation and to our chosen name. We call it a regional meeting, and that is what it will indeed be, even judging by what we discussed during our meetings. [passage omitted]

[Gilhar] Who more than you, Consul General Levin, knows that during such important visits, one often receives a reciprocal invitation to visit. Did the prime minister or foreign minister receive any invitation to visit the Soviet Union?

[Levin] I am not at liberty to elaborate on this subject; however, I will say that as a matter of course, as the resumption of relations draws closer, and one party visits the other, it is only natural that just as you said, there will be invitations for our leaders to visit the Soviet Union. I think it is only natural and eventually must take place.

[Gilhar] In other words, we should not be surprised if Mr. Shamir or Mr. Levi are invited to visit the Soviet capital in the near future?

[Levin] I do not know what you mean by the near future; however, I think it is self-evident. If the Soviets really want to become involved in the process, it is reasonable to assume that such visits will also take place.

[Gilhar] Thank you, Mr. Levin, and thank you, political correspondent Gutman.

U.S.-Soviet Stands Noted; More on 10 May Talks

TA1205074691 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 May 91 pp A1, 8

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar, 'Oded Zaray, Ori Nir, and news agencies]

[Excerpts] In their talks in Cairo today and tomorrow, the foreign ministers of the United States and the USSR will discuss inviting Israel and the Arab countries with which it shares common borders to a regional conference. The invitation will be extended by the two superpowers and will involve the participation of a representative on behalf of the EC and an observer on behalf of the UN secretary general. This was reported last night by senior political sources in Jerusalem. According to reports from Washington, Baker may decide to send the invitations at the end of his current shuttle tour, even if he has not obtained the early agreement of all parties to the framework of the conference.

The secretary of state intends to invalidate the argument that this is an international conference. Sending the invitations has been delayed due to Syria's demand that the UN secretary general also be among the hosts and Israel's objection to an ongoing conference and the inclusion of the United Nations. It is not yet clear whether the secretary of state has managed to talk Syria into forgoing its demand.

The specifics of the suggestion James Baker and Aleksandr Bessmertnykh are expected to offer Jerusalem, Cairo, Damascus, Amman, and Beirut are:

—The conference will be of an ongoing nature, and the document on its establishment will stipulate that it will not have coercive powers and will not be able to offer solutions without the agreement of the sides. In this context, the State Department is toying with the idea that the forum meet once every six months, provided that Israel and all the Arab countries agree to this and that the meeting serve only as a forum in which to report on progress in the contacts and is not used as a means to force any conditions on the bilateral deliberations between Israel and each Arab side.

—The conference will be convoked by the two superpowers. The EC will dispatch to these deliberations a representative with a right to address the forum. The UN secretary general will send an observer without any powers to represent him, pursuant to the Jarring mission based on UN Security Council Resolution 242. The representative will be the secretary general's

special envoy to the Israeli-Arab conflict. He will be Edouard Brunner, Switzerland's ambassador to the United States, whom Perez de Cuellar had appointed to replace Jarring.

—Resolution 242 will again serve as the basis for the peace conference, but at the initial stage of the negotiations the deliberations will focus on self-rule for the Palestinians and security arrangements for all sides. Baker's argument will be that since Resolution 242 constitutes the legal basis for the convocation of the conference, and since it stipulates that the UN secretary general must appoint an emissary to promote the peace efforts between Israel and its neighbors, it is only fitting that such an envoy be included in the conference.

—The problem of the representation of East Jerusalem Arabs will be resolved by way of the modalities for the election of the representatives irrespective of the domicile criterion. The United States cannot imagine that Faysal al-Husayni will be disqualified. If Israel insists on this, he will move temporarily to a residence outside Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

The impression from Bessmertnykh's talks is that the Arab countries are ready to show greater flexibility regarding their positions. The Soviet foreign minister said that he saw, after his talks in Damascus and Amman, that Syria and Jordan are tired of the conflict and realize that the situation has changed and the time has come to adopt a pragmatic approach. All the information from Damascus indicates that al-Asad is not interested in any linkage between the Palestinian delegation and the PLO.

Bessmertnykh explained in Jerusalem that the USSR is thinking about a conference that will continue until the end of the negotiations and could mediate between the sides, should the need for this arise, and offer ways to bridge the gaps. Shamir replied that he has no objection to an international conference meeting at the end of the process to validate the agreements that will be reached between the sides. He likewise did not rule out granting Europe a role. Foreign Minister David Levi leaves for Europe this morning for a meeting with the 12 EC foreign ministers.

The Soviet guest said that the USSR accepts the two-track approach, that its attitude is pragmatic, and that it believes that a peace conference is an important stage that will underscore and accord double significance to the stage of direct negotiations. He contended that the conference will not be coercive and will not adopt resolutions. In his meeting with the prime minister, the Soviet minister said that even though Moscow is unhappy with the settlements, it has no intention of disrupting aliyah as the principle of free emigration is an important component of the democratization process his country is currently undergoing.

In his meeting with Levi, Bessmertnykh said: "The history of the Middle East is full of missed opportunities. We must not miss this one. We share this view and must work together on the nuances. I feel that there is real readiness to advance toward peace and have spent many hours with the Arab leaders. My conversations with al-Asad were also serious, and I felt that the Arab world is anxious to terminate the hostility and the conflict and that the time is ripe for peace."

Levi: "Israel has been asked to respond to so many hypothetical questions, whereas the Arab countries have not given any answer. All the Arab countries, not just the confrontation states, should be brought to the negotiating table, because they are all in a state of war with us."

Bessmertnykh: "We should all share this aspiration."

Levi: "I hope al-Asad is convinced that the war path will not do and that he will embark on the peace path. So far he has worked to obtain strategic parity with Israel and has been employing sophisticated weapons. Action should be taken to stop the arms race."

Bessmertnykh: "The Arab countries also fear Israel and its strong military industries."

Levi: "Israel is prepared to offer all the Arab countries a nonbelligerency agreement, which should allay their fears and establish the atmosphere of trust required for negotiations."

Bessmertnykh tried to persuade Levi that the United Nations played an important role in the Gulf war and that that international body was the one to decide on the establishment of Israel. It is therefore only appropriate that it should participate in the process now. He related that prior to his departure for Israel, he leafed through archives material and found Golda Meirson's [Meir] letter of accreditation to the Soviet Union, which was received with sympathy and trust. "The ties have not been severed since; they are now developing and will reach their natural consummation upon the resumption of full diplomatic ties. This will happen very soon. We have grown closer to the United States and have decided to convert mutual trust into cooperation to resolve regional conflicts.

"It looks like we will share common points and parallel lines. You said some interesting things. I can sense mutual trust in our relationship. Unfortunately, history is complex, but even during the difficult past we understood the import of the existence of Israel and have never forgotten it. Rather intensive contacts have been held and today they are developed and very good."

The Foreign Ministry is anticipating an invitation for Levi to visit Moscow soon. The issue has been under discussion between the two foreign ministries for some time. The establishment of full ties has to do with progress in the peace process. The expectation, therefore, is that the event will not take place before the end of summer. [passage omitted]

Saudi Amir Reportedly To Visit E. Jerusalem

TA1205182191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1806 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Amir Turki Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, one of Saudi King Fahd's brothers, is due in East Jerusalem this Wednesday on what is called a private visit. Sources in the territories said this evening that, if the report materializes, this would be the first time that a Saudi personality has visited Israel.

The director of the Seven Arches Hotel, formerly the Intercontinental Hotel, on the Mount of Olives, has confirmed to our correspondent in the territories Amir Hay that two suites have been booked for the Saudi amir and his 10-member entourage. Sources in the territories told our correspondent that, although the visit is described as private, the Saudi amir may confer with several personalities in the territories. Our correspondent has also learned that one of the men accompanying the amir on his visit is a representative of the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah. One of the purposes of the visit may be to seek ways to aid the Palestinians in the territories.

Shamir Agrees to Conference at 'End' of Process

TA1105184491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 11 May 91

[Report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Halperin]

[Text] Tonight, between Bessmertnykh's first visit and Baker's fourth, Jerusalem expresses satisfaction with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates' willingness to dispatch an observer to the conference, although it would have preferred—it still hopes this will be the case—these countries to declare full participation. In effect, this is what Jerusalem told the Soviet foreign minister yesterday, after Bessmertnykh asked who Israel thinks should participate in the peace conference or, in his words, the shalom conference. Both the foreign minister and the prime minister said: All the Arab countries, everyone willing, should come to the opening session.

Mr. Shamir insisted on two no's: on the participation of the United Nations and the periodical sessions of the conference. Bessmertnykh, however, tried to convince him that this would be beneficial.

The prime minister remarked that he did not object to the convening of an international conference—yes, in these words—to sum up and ratify the agreements at the end of the process.

Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister's Office sources said tonight that, during his visit to Israel, Bessmertnykh did not raise the proposal for a preliminary encounter of the region's foreign ministers, which has been attributed to him in Cairo.

The issue of settlements was raised only in his tete-a-tete with the prime minister. Bessmertnykh said there is no connection between this issue and aliyah, while Mr. Shamir stressed again that there is no policy of directing immigrants to the territories.

Stresses Greater Israel 'All of Israel'

TA1205042791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says that there is a national public consensus on Jerusalem, but Israel will not only refuse to cede Jerusalem, it will refuse to give up any part of Greater Israel. We will not regress, said the prime minister, and will muster every bit of will and energy to insist on our right over Greater Israel. Greater Israel is all of Israel, and all of it is holy. Mr. Shamir was speaking at the ceremony opening the Jerusalem Day events at Merkaz Harav Yeshiva in the capital.

Mr. Shamir expressed disappointment with the small number of new immigrants settling in Jerusalem and said that the obstacles to aliyah must be removed.

After the rally, thousands of the yeshiva's students marched along the streets of Jerusalem all the way to the Western Wall plaza.

GCC Announcement on Peace Conference Welcomed

TA1205044891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 12 May 91

[Report by David Ze'ev]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] In Jerusalem, officials have welcomed the Gulf announcement [on agreement to assume an observer role in a Middle East peace conference] but said they have no official notification and for now, at least, are indicating that they do not see it as the kind of breakthrough that others may view it as, as the Gulf states, they say, are not as important as most especially Syria.

Levi Sees Progress in Announcement

TA1205104691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 12 May 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by political correspondent Arye Golan after the 12 May Cabinet session in Jerusalem—live]

[Text] [Golan] Do you share the view that Secretary Baker's upcoming visit is crucial to the peace process?

[Levi] I do not like the term crucial. I prefer the term important. We will pursue our talks and will do our best to continue to make progress. We will also hear what was discussed with the Arab countries. No doubt the information from those countries on their views on Israel's principles and understandings is very important. We will wait....

[Golan, interrupting] Mr. Foreign Minister, do you welcome the announcement by Saudi Arabia and the oil emirates on their readiness to assume the role of observer in the peace conference?

[Levi] We have demanded that all the Arab countries participate in the process. We must examine this concept of observer. This first of all marks progress, but we would like them to play a role, only not just as part of the Arab countries. Rather, we would like all the Arab countries to enter the process and we will hear, of course, that this is being taken care of. [sentence as heard] Many sources thought last week that the process was going to be confined only to one Arab country, but now there are indications that additional countries are joining. However, it would be premature to express any opinion as long as we have not had firsthand information about the chances.

Ben-Aharon Critical of 'Observers'

TA1205051091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, says that the consent of the Persian Gulf states, led by Saudi Arabia, to dispatch an observer to a peace conference does not contribute anything to the political process. Israel, he said, requires partners for negotiations on the termination of the state of war. He wondered what kind of advantage Israel would gain from the Persian Gulf states' participation in certain steps, while they still maintain their economic boycott of Israel and provide financial assistance to the PLO and Syria.

Qatzav, Ben-Aharon Differ

TA1205115191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 12 May 91

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan]

[Excerpts] The Cabinet meeting is over and the ministers have dispersed, and we know now that there are varying positions on the issue of the Saudi and Gulf states' decision to serve as observers at the peace conference. Minister Moshe Qatzav, for instance, told us that this is definitely a favorable development:

[Begin Qatzav recording] The Cabinet did not debate the Saudi decision. As for myself, I can say I am pleased, although the decision should not be regarded as a turning point or breakthrough in the Arab attitude, because their willingness has not resulted in a more moderate Arab stance. I would have been happier had the Arabs adopted more moderate positions. [end recording] [passage omitted]

After the Cabinet meeting, the Prime Minister's Office director general, Yosi Ben-Aharon, came out to the reporters—which he does not normally do—to comment on the Saudi decision, which had been welcomed by both Washington and Cairo. Yosi Ben-Aharon sees no news in the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries' approach:

[Begin recording] [Ben-Aharon] No, we see no progress, because there is no advantage in their participation as observers, because relations between them and us are problematic in that they still maintain a state of war and insist on an economic boycott. In our opinion, if they come to the convention with this attitude, they will not be much use as observers. We would like them to participate just like any other Arab country, so that we can discuss all the outstanding issues—mainly the ending of the state of belligerency.

[Golan] Do you share the belief that Secretary of State Baker's upcoming visit to Israel will be crucial to the peace process?

[Ben-Aharon] I do not know, and I do not wish to resort to dramatic definitions. I hope progress is made; if it is, we will participate in the regional encounter which will bring us to direct negotiations.

[Golan] Mr. Ben-Aharon, what did the prime minister mean by saying [at the Cabinet meeting] that settlements will be an issue for negotiations when negotiations take place? Did he imply that some day, we will consider renouncing the Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza settlements?

[Ben-Aharon] No, no, this is a misunderstanding. Such an interpretation is inconceivable. What the prime minister is saying is that those who raise the issue of settlements at this time, acts prematurely. Those who wish to raise this issue will be able to do so in the framework of negotiations on the permanent status, but not now.

[Golan] And our answer will be that we are not ready to abandon or dismantle settlements?

[Ben-Aharon] There is no one...[changes thought] We will never prevent Jews from living in any part of Greater Israel. [end recording]

Cabinet 'Determined:' No More Concessions

TA1305075691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 13 May 91 p 1

[Report by political correspondent Michal Yudelman]

[Excerpts] The government is determined not to make any more concessions in the next round of talks due this week with US Secretary of State James Baker, focusing on the preparations for the regional meeting or conference, sources close to the prime minister told THE JERUSALEM POST yesterday.

The sources stressed that, while the government is waiting "eagerly" to hear what agreements Baker has reached with the Arab states, it has made enough concessions already—indeed, it is the only government

involved which has made any concessions at all—and therefore has no intention of yielding any further. [passage omitted]

Despite reports that Baker's fourth visit tomorrow might be his final one, if he fails to reach the necessary agreements from Israel, sources close to the premier said that "there is no such thing as now or never and we don't see in this visit a last chance, but rather a continuation of the negotiations and the efforts according to our programm and on the basis of the concessions we've already made." [passage omitted]

Army To Investigate Allegations of Prison Abuse

TA1105045091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The chief of staff has appointed reserves Major General Refa'el Vardi to investigate suspicions of violence by soldiers against Arab detainees in military interrogation facilities in the territories. The chief of staff, General Ehud Baraq, made the decision following the release of a report by the Betzelem human rights watch group, and after consulting with the chief military prosecutor.

Incidents in Gaza; Egyptian Arms Smuggler Caught

TA0905112991 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 9 May 91 p A7

[By Eytan Rabin and ITIM]

[Excerpts] Palestinian sources reported yesterday that three locals were injured in clashes in Gaza. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] representative in the Southern Command reported that a soldier sustained slight injuries in a stoning incident in Rafah. He was evacuated to the hospital in Beersheba. No curfews were imposed in the territories and no extraordinary events were recorded.

Major General Dani Yatom, the commander of the Central Command, reported yesterday to the General Staff forum that a certain drop has been noted in stoning incidents in the West Bank. [passage omitted]

An Egyptian youth who infiltrated into Israel several times admitted yesterday at the Beersheba District Court that he had smuggled into Israel weapons and a large quantity of hand grenades with the intention of giving them to hostile elements. The 21-year-old youth was caught approximately one month ago near the cache for the smuggled goods, which he hid along the Nafha prison-Mizpe Ramon road. [passage omitted]

One day after his arrest, another 94 grenades were found nearby. They were smuggled by the same person on another occasion. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Conclusion of Bessmertnykh Visit

Bessmertnykh on Ties With Israel

JN1005121591 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1110 GMT 10 May 91

[Report on remarks by Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh prior to departing Amman on 10 May; unidentified reporter's questions and Bessmertnykh's answers in English with superimposed Arabic translation]

[Text] In a statement to reporters before leaving Amman today, Mr. Bessmertnykh described his talks with His Majesty King Husayn and senior officials as extremely constructive and extensive, covering all aspects of the Middle East situation as well as the primary issues related to convening a peace conference.

He said: I am perfectly satisfied with the identity of views between us on issues related to situation in the region.

[Begin recording] [reporter] Israel is expecting the USSR to restore ties with it. What are the Soviet conditions for this restoration?

[Bessmertnykh] Israel knows the Soviet Union's principled stand regarding the resumption of diplomatic ties. We will restore those ties within the framework of starting a peace treaty under the auspices of a peace conference. Relations between the two countries are bilateral and isolated and will be dealt with on merit.

[Reporter] Therefore, a peace conference must first be held in which the Soviet Union will participate before Moscow considers resumption of relations with Israel?

[Bessmertnykh] There is no connection between starting the conference and the restoration of ties; I mean, there is no official connection between the two issues. But the moment we feel that Israel will be an integral part of the peace process, this will facilitate the restoration of diplomatic ties.

[Reporter] Do you agree with Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze that pressure should be applied on states that do not wish to join the peace process?

[Bessmertnykh] I have not heard this statement, but I do not believe that we have reached the extent of imposing sanctions as long as the door of diplomacy is still open. Therefore, we must negotiate to convince the parties to join the peace conference.

[Reporter] Are you optimistic about realizing peace in the region?

[Bessmertnykh] I am optimistic about the fact that there is a chance now to begin the peace process. We have not had this opportunity before. This gives you a reason for dealing with the issue. This opportunity, however, is still fragile. We must not waste it.

[Reporter] How do you describe your visit to Jordan and your talks with His Majesty King Husayn and Jordanian officials?

[Bessmertnykh] I am very satisfied with the content of talks and the atmosphere in which they took place. The talks with His Majesty King Husayn and with my colleague, Jordanian Foreign Minister al-Masri, were very constructive and extensive. We covered all aspects of the situation in the Middle East and all aspects of how to deal with the desired peace conference. I am happy that views on the Middle East situation are identical between us and Jordan.

[Reporter] The Soviet Union still holds strongly to the card of Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel. Will you use this card to apply pressure on Israel to stop building settlements in the occupied territories?

[Bessmertnykh] The emigration you are talking about is part of the Soviet Union's general policy within the process of change toward democracy. The emigration is not restricted to Israel, but occurs in other parts of the world. We can look at the process of emigration from this angle only, not as a process involving one side against another. Nevertheless, we are concerned about the fate of these emigrants, and as part of this concern, you can see that we want to provide what is right for them. [end recording]

Al-Masri Summarizes Discussions

JN1005133291 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1116 GMT 10 May 91

[Remarks by Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri to unidentified reporters following Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh's departure from Amman on 10 May—recorded]

[Text] [reporter] Mr. Minister, based on your evaluation of the talks the Soviet foreign minister held with his majesty the king, how do you see the Soviet role in supporting efforts to establish peace in the Middle East?

[Al-Masri] Traditionally, the Soviet Union has had firm relations of friendship with Jordan and with the other Arab countries. Soviet support in the past has had a very important effect on Arab causes in various arenas, particularly the international arena.

Recently, there has been some doubt about the role the Soviet Union wants to play. This visit emphasizes that the Soviet Union wants to play the same traditional role in the region. In fact, it has the right to play this role. The talks between the Soviet minister and his majesty the king were within this framework. We found the same previous way of thinking and observance of the firm principles governing the application of international legitimacy, as well as recognition of the need to find a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

[Reporter] Is there some kind of promise from the Soviets to stop the emigration which feeds the settlements in the occupied Arab territories?

[Al-Masri] You heard what the minister said about it. It is what he told us during the meeting. It can be summed up as follows: The Soviet Union believes that settlements and the extensive settlement activity in the occupied territories jeopardizes peace and is illegal. Therefore, it must be stopped. Naturally, we hold the same view. In fact, we also presented this view to him and found agreement. I believe the Soviet Union is aware of its responsibilities regarding the issue.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, how do you envision the scope of the next stage? Or, what are the steps you expect will be realized to strengthen the peace process in the region?

[Al-Masri] Those who make the effort—primarily the U.S. secretary of state, and now the Soviet minister has joined him in the effort—must inevitably reduce the gap between the concerned parties regarding the basic points, and then start the peace process one way or another. As you know, the proposal now is to convene a conference during which talks will begin. Efforts by the United States, the Soviet Union, the Europeans, and perhaps also the whole international community, are now concentrating on the conference and on making it a success.

[Reporter] Reports have been circulating that Baker's visit to the region will be the last. Does this mean that current steps are about to achieve this peace process, or will there be future steps of another kind?

[Al-Masri] I cannot answer the question of whether it is the last tour, because we still do not know. This is Baker's fourth tour, however, and these efforts will undoubtedly end up in something definite. Perhaps Baker has come to a wider view and reached some definite points in his mind on how to start the peace process. Anyway, everything will be dealt with in good time.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, how far along is the issue of Palestinian representation and available options?

[Al-Masri] The options have not changed. We have declared more than once—and we repeat the same thing in every visit—that the options are open. The preference for us and for the PLO is the independent Palestinian delegation; there is no such thing as a closed option, however, and there is nothing that cannot be discussed. If there is a need to find another option, such as setting up a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, this can be discussed when the time comes.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, could one say that there is an Arab demand that the Soviet Union and the United States should apply pressure on Israel to get going with the peace process?

[Al-Masri] The Soviet Union should not be the only one applying pressure. We believe that the international community should do so because Israel is the one hampering the chances for peace: It is the one occupying territory; it is the one rejecting international legitimacy; it is the one setting up settlements contrary to all international resolutions. Therefore, if the situation rests on convincing or attempting to convince Israel to take a softer position, then there might not be too much of a chance to establish peace. A decisive position on Israel must be taken so that it will accept international legitimacy.

Additional Al-Masri Comments

JN1005123291 Amman Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 10 May 91

[Report by 'Ali Hamati]

[Text] After the Soviet foreign minister's departure from Amman today, Mr. Tahir al-Masri spoke about the latest issues. The Jordanian foreign minister asserted that Jordanian and Soviet views on the Palestinian problem were identical and that Jordan supports the U.S. efforts to solve the Palestinian problem.

Answering a question about a potential Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace conference and the Soviet stand on such a delegation, al-Masri said:

[Begin recording] [al-Masri] There was no specific answer from any side, including the PLO. But we have to look at the major points in reaching a peaceful settlement; and if there is an agreement on a certain point which necessitates that we change position or we take a different attitude toward the conference, toward the representation, we are ready, which means that we are flexible if the basics are being met and that includes the Palestinian participation in the conference. [end recording]

I asked Mr. al-Masri about the coordination between Jordan and the PLO over the next era.

[Begin recording] [Hamati] Your Excellency, allow me to go back to the Palestinian representation and the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. Could this in any way reflect any sort of agreement between Jordan and the PLO about the future role and self-determination of the West Bank?

[Al-Masri] There is enough understanding between the PLO and Jordan on many issues, but we prefer not to go into details and not to discuss this at this moment. We want the international community, the United States, Israel, to keep talking about the basics. Once we have reached an agreement on the basics, then other matters, especially the matter that concerns us, Jordanians and Palestinians, and Arabs, should be discussed later. So let us stick to the basics and everything will be discussed later. [end recording]

King Telephones Al-Asad, Discusses Baker's Plan

JN1305113091 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn telephoned Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad this morning. During the conversation, they exchanged views on a number of developments in the Arab arena, especially international peace efforts based on the U.S. peace plan.

This telephone call is a practical step in the policy of discussions between the two fraternal countries regarding the plan of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who visited Damascus yesterday and held talks with President Hafiz al-Asad within the framework of his fourth tour of the Middle East.

King Husayn To Visit Cairo in 'Coming Days'

NC1305085991 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 11 May 91 p 1

[Report By AL-ANWAR diplomatic reporter]

[Text] AL-ANWAR has learned from reliable Arab sources that King Husayn of Jordan will visit Egypt in the coming days, in an attempt to clear up the differences that marred the two countries' relations, which had become lukewarm during the Gulf war. The visit will be in the forefront of Arab developments in the wake of the pullout of Egyptian troops from the Gulf.

AL-ANWAR has also learned that the Jordanian monarch intends to ask Lieutenant General Zayd Bin-Shakir to form a new government to replace Mudar Badran's government. Major General 'Awwad al-Khalidi, Jordan's ambassador to Paris, is expected to hold the interior portfolio in the new government.

The same sources affirmed that the purpose of this change is to keep up with the changes in the region.

Foreign Ministry on Reopening Kuwait Embassy

JN1205061991 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 May 91 p 1

[By Mamduh Hawamidah]

[Text] A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry has announced that rapid and important contacts are under way between the Jordanian and Kuwaiti Governments to reopen the Jordanian Embassy in Kuwait, which was closed following the Gulf crisis.

The source, who asked to remain anonymous, told AL-RA'Y that the Foreign Ministry is expecting an answer soon.

The source said that Foreign Ministry officials are eager to reopen the Jordanian Embassy and restore normal representation in Kuwait to oversee the interests of Jordanians in Kuwait, defend their rights, and safeguard the rights of the expatriates who left Kuwait due to the crisis and the Gulf war.

French Defense Minister Arrives on Visit

JN1105172191 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe arrived in Amman this evening on an official two-day visit to Jordan during which he will meet with senior officials. He was received at the airport by Staff General Fathi Abu-Talib, chief of the General Staff; some of his assistants; the Royal Jordanian Air Force commander; the French ambassador; and the French military attache in Amman.

The chief of the General Staff welcomed the visiting minister and said he hopes the talks he will hold with senior Jordanian officials will be productive and useful, and will have a positive effect on the nature of relations between the two countries.

The visiting minister said he is happy to make this visit, his first to Jordan, and said he looks forward to meeting His Majesty King Husayn, his highness the crown prince, and senior Jordanian political and military officials, with whom he will discuss means to improve and strengthen ties between Jordan and France.

Received by King Husayn

JN1105191891 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] His Majesty the King received this evening at al-Nadwah Palace the French Defense Minister Mr. Pierre Joxe. The audience included a review of the current situation in the area and Jordanian-French relations.

The audience was attended by the prime minister, the minister of defense [as heard; both positions are held by same man, Mudar Badran], the chief of the Royal Court, his majesty's military secretary, and the French ambassador in Amman.

Bessmertnykh Cancels Beirut Visit

NC1305051991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] It was announced in Beirut last night that Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh has called off his visit to Beirut for emergency reasons. The visit was scheduled for tomorrow.

Ambassador Suhayl Shammas, Foreign Ministry secretary general, said that Soviet Ambassador to Lebanon Gennadiy Ilichev told him that the visit has been cancelled.

Diplomatic sources in Beirut said that Bessmertnykh must return to Moscow to take part in the talks with a ranking Chinese delegation which will visit the Soviet Union this week.

Sources Report on Possible Hostage Release

'Agreement' Alleged

NC1305082991 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 9 May 91 p 1

[Text] AL-SAFIR has learned from informed sources that the process of freeing the foreign hostages held in Lebanon will be effected within the context of the release of the Lebanese and some Palestinian detainees held by the Israeli enemy in al-Khiyam prison.

The sources added that negotiations led to this agreement, without specifying technical details or the timing. The sources denied that one single party is responsible for the hostage issue, noting that various intelligence agencies and some minor Islamic groups were responsible.

The sources pointed out that no one country wishes to appear responsible for the abduction and detention of the hostages.

Foreign Minister To Visit Iran

NC1005145391 Paris AFP in English 1441 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Beirut, May 10 (AFP)—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz Friday accepted an official invitation to Iran, where discussions could also focus on the fate of 12 Western hostages held in Lebanon.

The Lebanese Foreign Ministry said the invitation from Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati was handed to Mr. Buwayz by Iran's charge d'affaires in Lebanon, Mohammad Javad Zamaniyan.

Mr. Buwayz said he would try to undertake the trip after an official visit to Cairo May 16-17.

Mr. Zamaniyan meanwhile said his country was "willing to help solve" the hostage issue.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd two weeks ago officially asked Lebanon for assistance in securing the release of the Westerners, including Britons, who are believed to be held by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon.

In Tehran, Mr. Zamaniyan told the official IRNA news agency that his country had always been ready to help secure the release of hostages held in Lebanon and that Iran would spare no effort to resolve the issue.

Iranian Stresses Need To Press Israel

NC1205114791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi has criticized British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd's recent remarks linking the exchange of ambassadors between the two countries to the release of British hostages held in Lebanon. The Iranian official said: We have been surprised by the British stand on this issue, especially since we have not proposed to Britain the upgrading of our relations.

Va'ezi denied that Iran has any connection with the issue of Western hostages held in Lebanon. He expressed the belief that linking this issue to bilateral relations is wrong. He called for solving the hostage issue through collective efforts and on humanitarian grounds only and not according to the nationalities of the hostages.

Meanwhile, sources concerned with the issue of Western hostages in Lebanon have stated that this issue will not be resolved in the media. They said that what is required is for the United States and Europe to put pressure on Israel to release all the detainees it is holding in return for the release of the hostages held in Lebanon.

Imminent Release Seen

PM1305105391 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 9 May 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Multipartite Deal Begins With Release of Western Hostages in Lebanon"]

[Excerpts] Tehran, SAWT AL-KUWAYT—Informed Iranian sources have revealed that the Western hostages in Lebanon will be released imminently within the framework of a global deal in whose preparation U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher—representing the EC—in addition to Iran, Syria, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are taking part.

The sources say that the release of the Western hostages—starting with the Germans—will coincide with the release of Lebanese prisoners in Germany and Israel in preparation for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon to be followed by the deployment of international emergency forces in the South and the Lebanese Army's reassumption of its tasks and the extension of the Lebanese state's authority. [passage omitted]

The sources point out that the series of extensive contacts made over the past few weeks between Iran, Syria, and the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the United States, the EC states, and Israel on the other have resulted in agreement on the following arrangements:

1. Facilitation of the implementation of the Lebanese al-Ta'if agreement by internal and external parties to the Lebanese problem, that is including the Lebanese Army's deployment in all Lebanese areas and the disbandment of all the armed militias;
2. Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425;
3. The Lebanese State's recognition of Hizballah, which is close to Iran, as a political force in the country to be represented in the new Lebanese political system;
4. Release of all Western hostages in Lebanon;
5. Release of all Lebanese prisoners and some Palestinians in Israel as well as Israeli prisoners in Lebanon;
6. The lifting of the restrictions imposed by the United States on the movement of Iranian funds since 1979;
7. Inclusion of Iran in the new security arrangements for the Gulf region;
8. U.S. commencement of serious action to start resolving the Middle East problem.

The sources mentioned point out that, in his address to Tehran University students a few days ago, Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani hinted at the possibility of releasing the Western hostages imminently. [passage omitted]

Shiite Leader Proposes Trade

NC1305074191 Paris AFP in English 0723 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Tyre, Lebanon, May 13 (AFP)—Senior Lebanese Shiite leader Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din offered on Sunday [12 May] to trade bodies of dead Israeli servicemen held in Lebanon against Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

In a speech, Shaykh Shams-al-Din called on U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to "put pressure on Israel to carry out this exchange."

"Israel wants the bodies of its troops and the Lebanese parties holding them are ready to cooperate and will welcome any effort to obtain the liberation of our prisoners," said the shaykh, who is vice president of the Shiite superior council, the supreme Shiite authority in Lebanon.

Shaykh Shams-al-Din also hinted that the release of the Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners was the only remaining barrier to the liberation of 12 Western hostages in Lebanon.

Some 350 Lebanese and Palestinians are detained at al-Khiyam, the main Israeli holding center in Israel's unilaterally imposed buffer zone in southern Lebanon.

Their release has repeatedly been demanded by groups holding Western hostages and the bodies of at least two Israeli servicemen in Lebanon.

Israeli Defense Ministry spokesman Dani Nave said on May 5 that Israel was ready to release the detainees in the framework of the liberation of Western hostages as long as Israeli troops held in Lebanon were also set free.

Six Israeli soldiers are listed as missing in Lebanon and a seventh servicemen is said to be captured by groups here.

Officials, Syrians Discuss Developments

NC1105140891 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Syrian Chief of Staff General Hikmat al-Shihabi, and Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, chief of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, held a working lunch this afternoon.

The members of the high-ranking Syrian delegation arrived at the presidential office in Beirut at noon today and were immediately received by the president of the republic. The Chamber of Deputies speaker and the prime minister arrived at the presidential office soon thereafter.

The talks dealt with the Lebanese Government's accomplishments, preparations for the Lebanese-Syrian summit, and the special relationship between the two countries. The talks also dealt with current Middle East tour of the Soviet foreign minister which has already taken him to Syria and will take him to Lebanon on Tuesday, 14 May.

Khaddam, Karami Comment

NC1105184391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpts] Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and the delegation accompanying him left Beirut after more than four hours of talks with senior Lebanese officials. Lebanon was represented at the talks by President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami. [passage omitted]

After the meeting, Khaddam said:

[Begin recording] [Khaddam] We briefed his excellency the president, Speaker al-Husayni, and Prime Minister Karami on the developments and moves that are taking place in the area and our common interest in these moves. We exchanged views, and I can say that our views and analyses are in agreement. There is no doubt that such consultations are useful for the two countries and will continue to be so. The president briefed us on the steps the Lebanese Government has taken in its program to implement the national accord document, including the general security program and other issues. We assured him that Syria is extending and will continue to extend every assistance to the Lebanese state so that it

may reach a safe harbor and end the Lebanese crisis. Our views, analyses, and conclusions were in agreement.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency, the Lebanese Government has taken steps to impose its sovereignty over Lebanese territory, with the latest being the dispatch of the Army to the UN forces' area of operations. In your opinion, what is required on the Arab level to support the Lebanese demand for implementation of UN Resolution 425? What can the Arabs do in this regard?

[Khaddam] All Arabs must support the Lebanese state and conduct all the necessary contacts and efforts to help secure the implementation of Resolution 425 and Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon, because this withdrawal constitutes an important step in bolstering the state's efforts to impose its authority and to regain control of all resources in Lebanon. We, for our part, are holding contacts with these states and discussing ways and means to assist the Lebanese state to secure the full implementation of Resolution 425.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, the issue of special relations is on the agenda. A plan in this regard has been sent to Damascus. Was this issue discussed during this meeting?

[Khaddam] Our discussions always deal with the relations between our two countries. Today's discussions were the product of these relations; it was because of these relations that we briefed the Lebanese side on our contacts and activities and why our views agreed on the need to work together in light of current developments. Therefore, I can say that we discussed, in one form or another, some views on ways to implement the articles concerning Syrian-Lebanese relations contained in the national accord document approved by the Chamber of Deputies on 5 and 6 November 1989.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, turning to the issue of the foreign hostages in Lebanon, in view of all the successes achieved in connection with imposing the Lebanese state's sovereignty, do you believe that we are coming closer to resolving this issue?

[Khaddam] We believe that the circumstances are now more favorable. The only remaining obstacle is the continued detention of hundreds of Lebanese in Israel and the Israeli authorities' refusal to release them. As we have learned from various sources, the parties holding the hostages are demanding the release of the Lebanese hostages. We hope the current international efforts will persuade the Israelis to free the Lebanese who were kidnapped in southern Lebanon and other areas and detained in Israeli prisons.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, have you discussed the Soviet foreign minister's expected visit to Lebanon on Tuesday, 14 May?

[Khaddam] I briefed the president on the discussions we held with the Soviet side during the Soviet foreign minister's visit to Damascus. Naturally, we do not know exactly what subjects the Soviet foreign minister will discuss. The general outlines of the discussion, however, were clear for both the Lebanese and Syrian sides. We believe that this visit is significant. It is a new expression of the current international support for the Lebanese state and the national accord march, as well as a consolidation of the achievements made in the past few months in restoring Lebanon's strength and establishing peace here. [end recording]

Prime Minister Karami said the meeting touched on all issues and that views were identical. Responding to a question on the issue of special relations, Karami replied: We discussed and clarified certain points here, and we agreed on everything. Here is a recording of Karami's statement:

[Begin recording] [Karami] Today's meeting was part of the continuous consultations between Lebanese and Syrian officials. We discussed and assessed several issues, and our views were identical.

[Correspondent] Regarding the issue of special relations, it is known that a final plan has been drawn up. Did the Syrian side have any observations about this plan?

[Karami] Naturally we discussed certain points in this connection. When two countries plan to reach an agreement, it is only natural that they discuss the points involved in it. We discussed and clarified many points, and we agreed on everything.

[Correspondent] You say many points were clarified. Can you be more specific?

[Karami] Not until the Council of Ministers is briefed on the matter.

[Correspondent] What can you say about the demands from certain quarters that the issue of special relations be discussed only after the Army deploys on all Lebanese territory?

[Karami] Everyone is entitled to his point of view. We live in a democratic country, and everyone can express his views. Ultimately what counts, however, is that we as a government implement all provisions of the al-Ta'if agreement. We said that the al-Ta'if agreement was an indivisible whole and that no provision or article could be neglected or ignored, because this would obstruct the march. We certainly believe that organizing relations between Lebanon and Syria is vital and necessary because it leads, first, to organizing these relations; and second, to establishing security, stability, and tranquillity in all fields. Therefore, a decision on this issue will benefit both Syria and Lebanon, with Lebanon the greater beneficiary.

[Correspondent] Do you mean that meetings will continue?

[Karami] Of course. We want to have a final reading of the plan. It will later be referred to the Council of Ministers.

[Correspondent] As for the issue of appointing deputies, can we say, Your Excellency, that the matter has been finalized after today's meeting?

[Karami] Of course.

[Correspondent] As for UN Security Council Resolution 425, today's meeting with Khaddam coincided with Baker's arrival in Damascus. Did you touch on this issue?

[Karami] Resolution 425 is our first and foremost concern, because it is the key to resolving Lebanon's problems. All efforts focus on how to implement this resolution. You all realize that the issue of the South and Resolution 425 is not a domestic Lebanese issue. The matter involves regional and international parties, and so both the Arabs and our friends are concerned with it. That is why we hold consultations with all and request the help of all in securing the implementation of Resolution 425.

[Correspondent] Will this issue be discussed during the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo, and will there be a coordination of stands on it?

[Karami] Certainly there is coordination of stands. I met this morning with his excellency the foreign minister. We agreed on all the steps he will take in this connection.

[Corresponmdent] Your Excellency, is the date fixed for the Soviet foreign minister's visit to Lebanon? Some say it will be on Tuesday [14 May].

[Karami] It is said that the visit will be on Tuesday. No final date, however, has been set as yet.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Your Excellency. [end recording]

Hizballah Attacks Israelis in Tayr Harfa

NC1205123391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1200 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Hizballah announced today that it has killed or wounded a large number of Israeli soldiers and agents in a large scale attack. One Hizballah fighter was killed.

In a statement issued in Beirut today, the Islamic resistance explained that a number of fighters at dawn today simultaneously attacked forward enemy positions in Tayr Harfa, near the northern border of the western sector of the occupied border strip. The Islamic resistance said that fierce clashes broke out, and that the Israeli army and the agent militia evacuated a large number of dead and wounded. The statement said that one martyr of the Islamic resistance fell.

In retaliation, Israeli artillery subsequently heavily shelled the surrounding villages, wounding three civilians.

Army Deployment in Tyre, Suburbs Reported

NC1205165791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Units of the Lebanese Army's 6th Brigade's 63d Battalion deployed in Tyre and its suburbs this morning. They left the Henri Shihab Barracks in al-Awza'i in several stages last night and assembled in the southern village of 'Adlun. They left 'Adlun at dawn today and moved south to deploy in several positions, chiefly the Qudmus School north of Tyre, 'Abbasiyah, the Jall al-Bahr junction, Tyre's northern entrance, the Hammadiyah hills, and the Shabriha hills. The deployment extended as far as the boundary of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon area in 'Abbasiyah and Shabriha and covered all the hills surrounding Tyre. A unit of the 31st Battalion also deployed near the Imam al-Sadr Institute in Tyre.

Staff Colonel 'Isam 'Atwah, commander of the 6th Brigade, and Major 'Abd-al-Rahman Shuhaytilah, commander of the 63d Battalion, supervised the deployment.

Amal Warns Israel of Escalated Resistance

NC1205174591 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Security sources said today that armed Israeli agents murdered an Islamic resistance fighter inside the occupied border strip in the South. The sources added that a revolutionary of the Islamic resistance died during a clash with the agents last night. The other revolutionaries returned safely to base.

An Amal Movement media source has stated the following: Extreme tension prevails in Bint Jubayl and its vicinity following the heinous crime the Zionists and their agents perpetrated through agent Husayn 'Abd-al-Nabi against citizen Yusuf Sa'd. Foot and mobile units are patrolling the township and setting up temporary and permanent checkpoints to forestall any incident that could result from the anger of the citizens there. The Amal Movement denounces this heinous crime and warns the agents that if they persist in such acts, our response will take the form of escalating the qualitatively new form of resistance against the Zionists and their agents, along the lines of the joint operation on Tuhrah hill.

In another development, the occupation forces blew up the house of citizen Muhammad 'Ali 'Abbas in al-Qantarah on the pretext of having discovered an explosive device near his house.

Continued Tension Seen Between Fatah, FRC in South

NC1205175991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] According to security sources, gunmen opened fire on a checkpoint in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp near Sidon last night, killing one fedayeen and wounding another.

This incident further escalates the tension among conflicting Palestinian factions.

The checkpoint was manned by members of a splinter group of Fatah-The Revolutionary Council [FRC] and highlights the tension between the FRC, led by Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna], and the Fatah movement, led by Yasir 'Arafat. The sources said dozens of Fatah fighters patrolled the streets today and reinforced their checkpoint in the camp, which is 40 km from Beirut and the largest in the south. Another incident contributing to the escalating tension occurred last Friday when gunmen kidnapped five Fatah personnel who were manning a checkpoint at the entrance to 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp. Fatah sources accused the FRC of carrying out the abduction. The two groups have recently carried out reciprocal abductions and killings.

Reportage on Visit by U.S. Secretary of State

Baker Arrives

JN1105204791 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in Damascus at 1900 today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Receiving him at Damascus International Airport were Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the chief of the Foreign Ministry's Protocol, and the U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

Following his arrival, Secretary of State Baker told journalists that he was happy to know that the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] will attend the peace conference, in an observer capacity, when it convenes.

Meets With Al-Asad

JN1205164791 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1630 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Damascus, 12 May (SANA)—President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State James Baker at 1100 today. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and U.S. Ambassador in Damascus Edward Djerejian.

Conversation during the meeting centered on conditions in the region and the current efforts and contacts to boost the peace process in the region and the result of those efforts.

Mr. Baker explained the contacts that the United States has held, and will hold, with the parties concerned to complete discussion of the subjects under discussion.

The president reaffirmed Syria's genuine desire to establish a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, and its continued preparedness to cooperate with the current efforts to reach the best formula to boost the peace process.

The two parties agreed to continue contacts and to study the proposed ideas.

Mr. James Baker left Damascus at 1745 today following a two-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was seen off at Damascus international airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the chief of Foreign Ministry protocol, and the U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

Talks End; News Conference Canceled

JN1205141891 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1400 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Talks between President al-Asad and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Damascus have concluded. Nothing has yet leaked about the talks, which lasted about six hours. It was noted, however, that the joint news conference Baker and Faruq al-Shar' were scheduled to hold has been canceled. Baker is about to leave for Cairo where he will meet with his Soviet counterpart Aleksandr Bessmertnykh.

'Official Syrian Position' on Talks

JN1205163091 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] James Baker left Damascus for Cairo this afternoon after meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad for six hours. Our correspondent in Damascus Louis Faris conveys to us the official Syrian position following these talks:

[Begin Faris recording] At the end of the meeting, which lasted about six hours, Syrian presidential spokesman Jubran Kuriyah told Radio Monte Carlo that the talks dealt with the regional situation and the current efforts and contacts to activate the peace process in the region, as well as the results of these efforts thus far. Secretary Baker reviewed the contacts the United States held with the concerned parties and those it will hold with them in continuation of the discussion of the proposed topics.

The spokesman added that President al-Asad reaffirmed Syria's genuine desire for a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with UN resolutions, particularly Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. President al-Asad stressed Syria's continued readiness to cooperate with the current efforts to reach the best formula for promoting the peace process.

Finally, the two sides agreed to continue the contacts and study the proposed ideas. [end recording]

'Necessary Means' Urged To Pressure Israel

JN1105085291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0727 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Damascus, 11 May (SANA)—In an editorial today under the headline "The Implementation of International Resolutions," the newspaper TISHRIN says that the outcome of the international efforts to advance the peace process in the Middle East is unsatisfactory because of Israel's intransigence and refusal to abide by international resolutions.

The paper adds that for their part, the Arabs demonstrated every readiness to respond to the international efforts on condition that such efforts lead to a just and comprehensive settlement. Nobody, however, should expect the Arabs to cede their rights and territory and accept Israel's expansionist and settlement schemes and ambitions in the region on the pretext that Israel is intransigent and refuses to go back on its positions.

The paper says that the international community possesses the necessary means to impose its will as it did in regard to the Gulf crisis. The paper says: It is unreasonable for Israel to continue its defiance of international legitimacy and its resolutions for more than 40 years. The UN Security Council resolutions are clear and explicit. They denounce settlement, annul annexation, and call for an Israeli withdrawal in return for peace. There is no alternative to the implementation of these resolutions. Nothing prevents the UN Security Council from using the necessary means to implement its resolutions if Israel continues to abort the current peace efforts.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: International peace and legitimacy are indivisible. The continuation of the explosive situation in the Middle East without reaching the aspired settlement constitutes the gravest threat to peace, stability, and legitimacy in the world.

Afghanistan

Wakil Message to UN on Pakistani 'Interference'

LD1005200591 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] A message from Afghan Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil addressed to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar was circulated yesterday at the United Nations. It gives detailed information about Pakistan's interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The message says that in the three years since the signing of the Geneva accords, Pakistan stubbornly continues to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan using armed aggression. The foreign minister described the actions of Pakistan's regular army against the city of Khowst. Units belonging to the infantry, rocket, and artillery forces of Pakistan's armed forces—which total more than 10,000 men—took part in the Khowst attack. Pakistan's artillery units and commandos disguised as Afghan oppositionists carried out attacks in the regions of (Zahara), Shinah, and Mangal.

Hikmatyar: U.S., USSR 'Hatching Conspiracies'

BK1005130591 Lahore THE NATION in English 10 May 91 p 3

[From the bureau correspondent]

[Text] Peshawar—Engineer Gulbuddin Hikmatyar has alleged that both the superpowers are hatching conspiracies against Afghan Mujahidin with a view to create hurdles in their efforts for setting up an Islamic government in Afghanistan.

Addressing a Press conference on Thursday, he said that in support of such conspiracies, both the superpowers are launching baseless propaganda against the Afghan Mujahidin. He said that Mujahidin commanders' joint Shura was formed by America with a view to provoke the Mujahidin commanders against their party leaders and also to widen splits among the Afghans.

He further added that Washington has assured Moscow that US administration would not allow setting up what they called fundamentalist government in Afghanistan which he said was a shameful act for a champion democracy.

Commenting on news reports that his party named Pacha Gul Wafadar, a former Minister in the then Cabinet of Dr Mohammad Hassan Sharq as head of the Interim Government, the Afghan leader termed it absolutely baseless. He said that it was impossible for them to sort out their differences with Najib government through political ways. He also said that they were not ready to hold negotiations on current situation or future of Afghanistan with Najib or with Soviet Union.

Similarly Mr Hikmatyar expressed ignorance about a high level Pakistani delegation's meeting with representatives of the Najib government in Geneva and said that he was uncertain that Pakistan would do such without wishes of the Mujahidin.

When asked about his frequent meetings with Soviet Ambassador in Kabul, Golbuddin Hikmatyar said that he held meetings with many Soviet delegations in the last two years but such meetings were not aimed for discussing future of Afghanistan.

He admitted that Kabul Radio broadcasted interviews of some of the generals who escaped from the Mujahidin or ICRC [International Committee of Red Cross] custody recently but he outrightly said that such generals had not escaped from his partymen. He said that they handed over list of the Afghan soldiers, captured by his partymen in Khowst to ICRC team and they have the intention to exchange such POW's [prisoners of war] with Najib government.

When asked that whether Afghan leaders have finalised formula for talks with a Soviet delegation arriving in Pakistan, Mr Hikmatyar said that they were not yet been contacted on such subject and opined that such meeting would be held directly between Islamabad and Moscow. He said that they would not discuss future of Afghanistan with Soviets or other foreign country as such issue related only to Afghans.

He added that Mujahidin would soon capture Kabul like Khowst.

Mojaddedi Says Rebels Seek No Superpower Help

BK1305023691 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 12 May 91 p 1

[Text] Chakwal, May 11—The President of Interim Government of Afghanistan, Sebghatullah Mojaddedi said here on Saturday that he would not seek the help of any superpower for the liberation of Afghanistan.

Talking to newsmen at Darul Uloom Hanfia, Sebghatullah Mojaddedi said that Najib government could not stand a day or so in front of Afghan Mujahidin without Soviet support.

Mr Mojaddedi, said Jihad would be intensified after melting of snow and if some other towns of Afghanistan fell to Mujahidin, Kabul would be captured.

Sebghatullah Mojaddedi appreciated the efforts of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for the enforcement of Shari'a in the country.

'Extremists' Launch Missile Attack on Kabul

LD1205161791 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] The warmongering extremists today fired 12 surface-to-surface missiles on residential areas of Kabul. As a result, a Kabul citizen was martyred and another 17

persons were injured. The BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY's military section reports that the injured were immediately transported to hospitals and admitted for treatment.

Pakistani militarists are supplying the missiles—which are Sakr and cluster types—to the warmongering extremists for the mass killing of our Muslim and religious compatriots.

Today's missiles were launched from northwest of Kabul and hit residential areas in the 3d, 7th, 9th, and 10th Wards, causing material damage.

State Security Personnel Ambush Hikmatyar Group

LD1205141991 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1330 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Personnel of the Ministry of State Security carried out an ambush in parts of Khashrud District in Nimruz Province. As a result, a number of men belonging to the fundamentalist Gulbuddin group, who were disrupting the peaceful life of the local people, were crushed, and a quantity of their arms and ammunition were seized. The weapons include 35 surface-to-surface missiles, 15 anti-tank missiles, five anti-vehicle mines, two communications systems, and thousands of rounds of light weapon shells.

Rebels Kill Faryab Province Governor, Commanders

BK1205155291 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] According to reports from Afghanistan, following two days of fierce fighting with Kabul regime troops, the mujahidin have occupied two security posts belonging to the Kabul regime on the outskirts of Dasht-e-Qal'eh of Takhar Province. According to the AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY, the mujahidin captured a large number of Kabul troops in the city and surrounded a military base.

In their recent operations in Herat Province, the mujahidin killed about 400 Kabul regime troops and militiamen. Meanwhile, a report received on the occupation of Qeysar District in Faryab Province says that during the fight, the governor of the province and two commanders of the Kabul regime were killed.

'Fierce Fighting' Near Herat Airport Reported

BK1305044891 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin took action in the Jindajan area causing heavy losses of life and property of the Kabul regime. Reports say that fierce fighting is continuing in Herat, as well as on the Tulwandi highway and near the Herat airport.

Najibullah Stresses Need for UN-Supervised Polls

LD1205204991 Warsaw PAP in English 1935 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Kabul, May 12—President of Afghanistan Najibullah said in an interview with PAP correspondent Ryszard Solski that elections held under the auspices of the United Nations are the only acceptable way to realize the will of Afghan society. The president stressed that he was convinced the mujahidin will also agree with this and added that recent talks between his envoys and representatives of mujahidin brought significant results attesting to an emerging division between forces supporting peaceful settlement and advocates of war.

Speaking about the prospects for the solution of the conflict in Afghanistan President Najibullah said that the principal reason for the present impasse was the direct external interference and intervention, chiefly that by Pakistan. Referring to Afghanistan's relations with East European countries Najibullah stated that they were always good and that his country had particularly good contacts with Poland, especially as regards cultural, technical and economic cooperation.

'Instruction' on Municipal Election Commissions

LD0905214591 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] An instruction has been issued by esteemed Fazel Haq Khaliqyar, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan on the structure of the election commissions for the councils of the wards and cities of Herat, Qandahar, Jalalabad, Konduz, Mazar-e Sharif, Shabarghan, Pol-e Khomri, and Lashkar Gah, in accordance with Decree No. 119, dated 30 April 1991, of esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, and the instructions of Article 25 of the municipalities law. The text of the instruction follows:

1. The structure of the election commissions for the councils of wards and cities:

The head of the judicial court of a province is the chairman of a commission. The following are commission members: a representative of a governorate, two representatives of the municipality of a province, two representatives of the department of education, two representatives of the department of finance, a representative of the sarandoy command, a representative of the department of state security, a representative of the statistical department, a representative of the department of Islamic affairs and endowment, two representatives of the department of culture and information, and a representative of the peace front.

2. The governors of the provinces are dutybound to appoint and approve the relevant candidates as the members of the election commissions, following the instructions of paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Municipalities Law in line with the structure stated in Article 1 of this instruction.

Bangladesh

Indian Prime Minister Arrives, Promises Aid

BK1205092491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] The prime minister has cautioned Pakistan that India will not tolerate any transgression into its territories. Talking to newsmen accompanying him on his short visit to Bangladesh this morning, he said Islamabad should stop border infiltration. Describing the recent border incidents as unfortunate, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said such misadventure only spoils the relations, increases tension, and vitiates the cordial atmosphere. The prime minister said that successful handling of recent attempts of intrusion by Pak-trained militants in Jammu and Kashmir proves the preparedness of our forces.

During his talks with the Bangladesh prime minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, Mr. Chandra Shekhar assured that all possible assistance, including emergency supplies of rice, will be provided for the cyclone-hit people. He said India will supply as requested by Bangladesh within the next two days from West Bengal.

Later, talking to newsmen at Dhaka Airport just before his departure, the prime minister said that any request for assistance from Bangladesh will be agreed to. Mr. Chandra Shekhar said India will do everything possible within its means, though any assistance in this type of calamity is not sufficient. He described the cyclonic situation as the worst and beyond the imagination of the human mind. The prime minister offered help for reconstruction of roads, bridges, and railways. India is also ready to send more helicopters if required by Bangladesh. Our correspondent says that six helicopters have already been placed at the disposal of the Bangladesh authorities. Besides, two planeloads of 10 tons of relief materials are arriving in Dhaka from India daily since Monday.

On his arrival in Dhaka, he was received by the Bangladesh prime minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, at the airport. Mr. Chandra Shekhar immediately proceeded to Sawar, the national monument of martyrs, to pay homage to those who laid down their lives during the liberation war of 1971. During his brief stay in Dhaka, the prime minister also met the acting president of Bangladesh, Mr. Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed.

Offers Food, Construction Help

BK1205140391 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 12 May 91

[Excerpt] India has offered to Bangladesh substantial quantities of rice and expertise in the reconstruction of roads, railways, and communication network in that country shattered by the recent cyclone. The dispatch of rice is to begin tomorrow and the exact quantum of assistance is to be decided by officials of the two countries. The offer was made by the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, during his talks in Dhaka today with the Bangladesh acting president, Mr. Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, and the prime minister, Begum Khaleda Zia. He offered India's sympathy and full support to the people of Bangladesh in their hour of distress.

The Bangladesh leaders briefed the prime minister about the extent of damage caused by the cyclone and said it was really thoughtful of Mr. Chandra Shekhar to visit Dhaka in the midst of elections in India. The prime minister inquired about the specific assistance Bangladesh would require and India could offer. He also offered assistance in the training of Bangladesh personnel in weather forecasting. Our correspondent Ratan Salve who accompanied the prime minister reports that Mr. Chandra Shekhar's visit has been a great success as it has shown to Bangladesh people India's willingness to share with neighbors whatever it has in their hour of calamity. [passage omitted]

Japanese, Chinese Envoys Meet Khaleda Zia on Aid

BK1105165091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Japan will provide assistance for building permanent disaster shelters, medicare centers, and educational institutions in the cyclone-battered coastal areas of Bangladesh. This was conveyed to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia by Japanese Ambassador Toshio Saiki in Dhaka today. Ambassador Saiki said he would soon initiate dicussion with concerned Bangladesh authorities regarding construction of the shelters.

Chinese Ambassador Chen Songlu also called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. Mr. Songlu handed over to her a letter of Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng. The Chinese prime minister in his letter expressed his grief and sorrow at the loss of life and property during the devastating cyclone and tidal surge. The Chinese envoy extended an invitation on behalf of Prime Minister Li Peng to Begum Khaleda Zia to visit China. She accepted the invitation. Bangladesh, she said, attaches great importance to the friendship between Bangladesh and China and expressed the confidence that it would grow from strength to strength in the years to come.

Meanwhile, the first consignment of 25 tons of emergency relief materials from China has arrived in Dhaka. The Chinese Government has also decided to provide two helicopters to join the relief operation. The helicopters will be arriving soon.

Foreign Minister Leaves Dhaka for Tokyo 11 May

BK1105163491 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman today left for Japan to attend the Tokyo forum on the least developed countries [LDC's]. Jointly sponsored by

the Japanese Government and the United Nations Capital Fund, the three-day forum, a followup of the LDC conference in Paris last year, will focus on operational development policies of the developing countries.

Tons of Food To Be Drawn From SAARC Reserve

BK0905164491 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Bangladesh has decided to draw 40,000 tons of food from its own allocation in the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] Food Security Reserve. In addition to its own allocation, Bangladesh will draw substantial quantity of food from the allocations of India and Pakistan from the stock to meet the emergency needs caused by the catastrophic cyclone. The SAARC Food Security Reserve was set up in 1987 at the SAARC summit in Kathmandu to meet the needs of member countries in the event of emergency.

Crop Losses, Deaths, Foreign Aid Figures Given

BK1105165691 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Total loss of crops caused by the cyclone and tidal surge in the coastal belt of the country is estimated at about 276.06 crore taka. Of this loss, Boro paddy amounts to about 155.49 crore taka, and the Ash paddy 16.4 crore taka, and the rest is accounted for other crops. This was stated by Information Secretary Kazi Manzoor A. Maula while briefing newsmen in Dhaka this evening. He said the total quantum of the lost product stands at three lakh tons.

Regarding relief operation, the information secretary said dry food, including roti [bread] and biscuits, are being continuously sent to the affected areas. So far, 122,000 pieces of chapati [whole wheat bread] were sent to Chittagong area. A total of 56,786 tube wells have been made operational in the affected areas. Total relief goods sanctioned for the cyclone-battered areas till yesterday included three crore 51 lakh taka, besides 4,831 metric tons of wheat, 9,000 metric tons of rice, 1,000 tons of gur [molasses], 15 lakh pieces of chapati, and 138,000 pieces of bread, 6,000 pieces [as heard] of water cans, 250,000 pieces of saris, 8,000 pieces of blankets, 36,451 pieces of lungi [loincloths], and 80,000 kg of biscuits, and 33,400 bundles of [word indistinct] sheets have been sanctioned. Sixteen helicopters made 214 sorties till yesterday, dropping 354 metric tons of relief materials to the affected areas.

The total death figure in the devastating cyclone now stands at 138,886.

Foreign assistance pledged so far amounts to 21 crore, 78 lakh, 63,000 U.S. dollars. The assistance came from Australia, Bhutan, Burma, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, Indonesia, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, UK, and USA, and regional organizations and international agencies, including SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation], EEC, UNICEF, UNDP [United Nations Development Program], FAO, and WHO.

Opposition Criticizes Government Relief Measures

BK0905164891 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] The Jatiya Sangsad [parliament] today unanimously adopted a condolence resolution on the tragic death of 45 people in Tuesday's [7 May] tornado in Ghazipur. Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas moved the resolution when the house resumed its session after a four-day recess. One minute silence was observed in the house in memory of those killed in the tornado. The house offered munajat [prayer] for the salvation of the departed souls and sought divine blessings for the nation to overcome this sudden crisis with patience and fortitude.

The house extended today's business at the suggestion of deputy leader of the house, Education Minister Professor A.Q.M. Badruddoja Chowdhury, to devise plans and (?parleys) on the post-cyclone situation.

A number of opposition members earlier demanded a full day debate on the issue. Initiating the discussion, Tufail Ahmed of Awami League criticized the government's relief efforts adding that enough has not been done in providing help to the survivors of this unprecedented catastrophe. He alleged that a large number of bodies is still lying in the affected areas awaiting burial.

The Jatiya Sangsad this evening continued general discussion on the post-cyclone situation. The house was in session when reports last came in.

India

'Sources' Ridicule Pakistani Charges on Kashmir

BK1005160891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Official sources in New Delhi have ridiculed Pakistan's allegations that civilians were killed in the recent encounter between the security forces and Pakistan-trained militants in the Kupwara sector in Jammu and Kashmir. The sources expressed surprise that Islamabad chose to describe the AK-47 wielding infiltrators as innocent civilians. During the encounter lasting for about four days, 83 AK-47 rifles, six machine guns, four rocket launchers, and large quantities of ammunition were recovered from the militants.

Meanwhile, the situation remained generally peaceful in Srinagar and other parts of the valley, with the day curfew confined to few localities. Security forces are patrolling the curfew-bound areas. Precautionary curfew also continued in Sopor and Baramula towns.

Pakistani 'Saboteurs' Cross Border

BK1105003091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1731 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] New Delhi, May 10 (AFP)—Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar accused Pakistan on Friday of sending trained saboteurs across the border to create disturbances in Indian-held Kashmir.

Indian defence authorities meanwhile said "extraordinary" Pakistani troop movements were taking place along the line of control that separates the Indian and Pakistani-controlled parts of Kashmir.

Mr. Shekhar was quoted by the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) as saying in the northern state of Rajasthan that Pakistan was sending infiltrators and saboteurs into Moslem-majority Kashmir, where militants are fighting for secession from Indian rule. He warned that Pakistan would have to pay a "heavy price" unless it stopped the infiltration and that India would not tolerate any "misadventures" in Kashmir.

Mr. Shekhar's remarks, at an election rally at Rajasthan's Churu area, came 24 hours after Pakistan Army chief General Mirza Aslam Beg declared that his armed forces were fully capable of crushing any external aggression. Gen. Beg made the statement in Islamabad after accusing Indian troops of "unprovoked shelling" from across the control line for six straight days. He also the alleged firing had added to tensions on the volatile border.

Earlier, officials in the Indian-ruled part of Kashmir said 91 Moslem militants returning from Pakistan were shot dead in a pre-planned ambush by Indian troops at Chowkibal border area Sunday.

Reaction to the successful ambush by militant groups and their supporters in Indian Kashmir was violent, reports from the state capital of Srinagar said, with at least 61 people dying in clashes with Indian security forces in the past four days.

PTI said Mr. Shekhar, who is currently caretaker prime minister and defence minister and is contesting national elections in India later this month, had asked Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to stop the alleged interference in Kashmir. "Mr. Nawaz Sharif, with all humility, I can say this is not the way to strengthen friendship," he said.

The prime minister also cautioned that India's desire for improved ties with neighbouring countries should not be construed as its weakness. "No power on earth can separate Kashmir from India," he said, adding that India and Pakistan, instead of engaging in confrontation, should "help each other in bringing prosperity to the region." India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir since the Asian subcontinent's 1947 independence from British rule.

Defence authorities in Jammu, winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir State, said Friday "extraordinary Pakistani troops movement" was taking place across the line of control which has divided Kashmir since the third war in late 1971. They said the movement had been detected in an aerial inspection by a team of defence officials.

"We have (thus) also directed our troops and BSF (paramilitary Border Security Forces) to intensify patrolling (along the control line)," they said.

Shekhar Warns of Consequences

BK1105030691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, has warned Pakistan of serious consequences if it continues to send infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing public meetings in Rajasthan, Mr. Chandra Shekhar expressed concern at the infiltration into Kashmir by Pakistan-trained terrorists. Recalling that he had extended the hand of friendship toward the Pakistan prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said the way the infiltration is growing, it seems he is not willing to cooperate. He criticized Mr. Nawaz Sharif for this and said no force in the world could take away Kashmir from India. The prime minister said those across the border who are adopting the dangerous path of secessionism will be given a fitting reply. He said India's desire to improve relations with Pakistan and other countries should not be taken as its weakness. Mr. Chandra Shekhar said the people of India are ready to make any sacrifice to preserve the unity and integrity of the country.

Dubey Departs for Beijing for Border Talks

BK1105163091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, has left for Beijing to attend the third session of the Sino-Indian joint working group on the boundary issue. The working group was set up in December 1988 and had its last meeting in New Delhi.

Kidnapped Legislator Released; 4 Naxalites Freed

BK1305102491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, the Congress-I MLA [member of legislative assembly], Mr. Sudhir Kumar, who was kidnapped by the Naxalites on Saturday, was released in Meerut District this morning. He has since reached Hyderabad safely. Four Naxalites, whose release was demanded by the kidnappers, were freed yesterday.

BJP Leader Rules Out Alliance With Congress-I

BK1005152291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has said that his party will have no alliance with the Congress-I either before or after the elections. He was talking to newsmen in New Delhi today.

The party vice president, Mr. K.R. Malkani, who was reported to have said yesterday that the BJP may seek Congress-I support, in a statement today said that he had been misquoted by the media.

On Bihar, Mr. Vajpayee said the uncertainty must end and elections in the state held on schedule.

Gandhi Denies 'Understanding'

BK1005152491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, has said that reports of his party having reached a nationwide understanding with the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] for the coming elections are baseless. Mr. Gandhi was talking to newsmen in Cochin today. He said just because the Congress-I is supporting an independent candidate in Kerala, who is also being supported by the BJP, does not provide the basis for coming to a conclusion on his party's alliance with the BJP.

Referring to Punjab, Mr. Gandhi said the Congress-I decided to boycott the elections for what he described as stakes being high and concerning the unity and integrity of the country.

Iran

Paper Urges Strengthening Ties With U.S. Allies

LD1205092591 Tehran IRNA in English 0720 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 12, IRNA—Commenting on Iran's normalization of relations with a number of Western countries in the past few months the English daily 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' wrote in its editorial Sunday that Tehran should try to strengthen ties with the U.S. allies independent of Washington's influence.

Referring to Washington's insistence in not engaging in any give-and-take situation with an open mind with Iran, the English daily said, "it wants ties with Iran on its own terms," adding "to this mentality Iran's response has been a categorical no and it most probably will not succumb to pressure."

"The idea of resuming ties with Washington gets consideration in the Islamic Republic now not because America can help or that it can solve any of Iran's problems but because America has been so vindictive and goes out of its way to obstruct and disrupt roots of friendship between Iran and other countries."

"Despite the Islamic Republic's desire to improve ties with all countries including the Western ones and despite its determination to move the country forward in its development plans, it does not seem that the U.S. can reestablish ties by merely relying on pressure or arms-twisting tactics."

"As far as the idea of having friendship with U.S. allies is concerned the Islamic Republic will have to try to find a way to deal with them independent of the U.S. influence," the editorial concluded.

Khamene'i 'Totally Satisfactory' After Operation

LD1105202391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Following the hospitalization of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the eminent leader of the Islamic Revolution, for a gall bladder operation, the following statement was issued moments ago by the medical team treating his eminence:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. With gratitude to exalted God and to the attention of his holiness the lord of the age, may our souls be sacrificed to him and with the kind prayers of the hezbollah ummah, we inform our compatriots with the greatest pleasure that the operation of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the eminent leader of the Islamic revolution, may his shadow extend, was undertaken with complete success, and his eminence's general condition after the operation is totally satisfactory. The hezbollah ummah is expected to spare no kind prayer for the quickest possible recovery of his eminence.

[Signed] The medical team treating the eminent leader

Physician Interviewed

LD1205114291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 12 May 91

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mohammadi-Golpayegani, head of Ayatollah Khamene'i's office, and Dr. Fazel, head of the medical team that operated on Khamene'i, by unidentified correspondent in Tehran on 12 May—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] We are now in the presence of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mohammadi-Golpayegani and the medical team treating his eminence, Dr. Fazel, Dr. Manafi, and Dr. Eliyasi. [passage omitted] Can you please tell us under what conditions the operation took place and how is his eminence's spirit now? What were his eminence's final words and how was his general mood just before the operation?

[Golpayegani] The operation took place last night after congregational prayers in the hospital led by his eminence. The people have heard the statement issued by the medical team. As they were taking him toward the

theater and as he was gradually losing consciousness, his spiritual face could be plainly seen and his words were all of the Creator until he became completely unconscious under anaesthetic. I want to take the opportunity to thank his medical team who did everything in their power to carry out their grave responsibility in the best possible way, especially our dear brother, the honorable Dr. Fazel, and everyone else involved. I want to express my sincere gratitude because the matter was no small one and Dr. Fazel's interpretation was that even though the illness was not important, nevertheless the patient was very important to us. [passage omitted]

I want to conclude by saying that throughout the operation, His Eminence Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani, honorable president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni, were present in the hospital.

[Correspondent] [passage omitted] Can you tell us about the observations and results of the specialists' examinations in the course of the operation.

[Fazel] The initial measures (?anaesthetized) the gall bladder. In the course of the operation, the examinations which are normally carried out during stomach operations were carried out with precision. God be praised, all the organs were healthy. The gall bladder showed signs of recent and chronic inflammation. The walls were somewhat thicker and there were some attachments around it [chasbandegiha'i 'atrafash bud]. It was dilated and (?one of the) gall stones had blocked the channel leading out of it. That is what causes most of the pain. We did not see any signs of a duodenal ulcer. Previous checks also did not show any signs of this. The gall bladder was easily removed. In the course of the operation, photographs of the bladder and channels were taken so that it could be seen if there was anything there. The photographs were normal.

[Correspondent] Please tell us about his eminence's condition and situation now.

[Fazel] Firstly, the condition of His Eminence Mr. Khamene'i is very good. In general, gall bladder operations are not very difficult and severe operations for patients. Therefore, in his case, bearing in mind that he is relatively young and in good health, there will be a very natural and normal period after such an operation. It is natural that there will be some pain after the operation and these can be dealt with with tranquilizers. Nevertheless, the point worth mentioning both about his eminence the imam [Khomeyni], may he be admitted to paradise, and about his eminence the leader [Khamene'i], and in general about all those who possess a deep spiritual character is that they are in a state of peace and complete surrender to God. It is as if these operations and the threater are nothing to them. They are very calm, very ordinary, very normal. They are in a world of their own. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Doctor, can you tell us how long the recovery period is after such operations?

[Fazel] Normally, such patients stay in the hospital for four to seven days; that is, for people who have had a gall bladder operation. The day after the operation, the patient can usually walk with assistance. On the second or third day, he can walk unaided. Normal activities can be resumed after three or four weeks; sports and heavy activities normally after six weeks. In general, after operations involving general anaesthetic, two or three weeks must elapse before the patient can recover former vitality. As everyone who has undergone such operations will know, the patient tires easily and must rest, but his general condition is quite good. With regard to the resumption of normal activities, three to four weeks is probably a good period.

USSR Criticized for Renewing Israeli Ties

LD1105203191 Tehran in English to Europe 1830 GMT 11 May 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh arrived in Tel Aviv yesterday and was greeted by foreign minister of the Quds [Jerusalem] occupying regime, David Levi. The Soviet foreign minister is the highest official of that country to visit the occupied Palestine since 1948. [passage omitted]

According to political observers, this visit, reckoned as a turning point in the Kremlin's Middle East policy, is taking place in line with the changes introduced in the Soviet foreign policy recently. Formulators of the Soviet foreign policy, after a [word indistinct] a dominance of ideology from their diplomatic ties with other states, have moved in a direction which, in the first place, can realize their national interests alone. Since a while ago, the Soviet Union has initiated efforts to set up closer ties with the Quds occupying regime. By applying the leverage of Jewish immigration to the occupied Palestine, the Soviet Union is trying to secure Muslim concessions in its ties with the West, especially on the Zionist's influence in [word indistinct] trusts and companies at global level to widen up opportunity to Moscow to setting up closer relations with Tel Aviv to acquire further loans for improving its adverse economic situation. The Quds occupying regime, too, in a bid to come out of political isolation and to reduce pressures stemming from the Soviet support for the Arab states and the PLO, considers establishment of close ties with Moscow as a privilege for itself in the face of the [word indistinct]. [passage omitted]

Political observers believe that, since no basic change has taken place in Tel Aviv's racist and hostile policies as compared to 1967, when ties between the two countries were officially severed, resumption of Moscow-Tel Aviv relations presents no demogogic justifications. Undoubtedly, adoption of such a policy will inflict a direct blow upon the Kremlin's relations with Islamic countries.

Today, the Soviet Government has made the Palestinian's fate a scapegoat of its own (?coveting). Such an act will certainly jeopardize Moscow's political image and stature.

Armed Forces To Hold Maneuvers in Gulf

LD1205142191 Tehran IRNA in English 1303 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 12, IRNA—The Iranian Armed Forces are to stage large-scale sea maneuvers code-named "Piruzi-2" (Victory-2) in the Persian Gulf as of Wednesday, May 15, to maintain their combat prowess.

The 6-stage military games will be carried out on an 18,000 square mile area stretching from Iran's Lavan Island to the Nowruz off-shore oil fields in the northern and central parts of the Persian Gulf.

Naval units of the regular Armed Forces and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) naval forces, will be assisted by 30 Air Force jet fighters and several helicopters in the nine-day war games.

Friday Prayers Leader Urges Islamic Unity

LD1005113791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 10 May 91

[Excerpts] On the anniversary of the heart-rending martyrdom of His Eminence Imam Ja'far Sadeq, the sixth shining star of the firmament of guardianship and the imamate, the epitome of learning and piety, may God's peace be upon him, our believing and pious compatriots attended the Friday prayers venues, thus observing the enduring Mohammedan tradition.

The glorious Friday prayers service for Tehran was held at Tehran University and its immediate environs, with the mass participation of committed worshippers. Ayatollah Emami-Kashani led the prayers. [passage omitted]

Ayatollah Emami-Kashani stated: Because the Islamic revolution tried to awaken world Muslims and the deprived, it has been the target of the envy and spite of its enemies. If Islamic society achieves cultural and intellectual growth, usurping Zionism will no longer be able to turn innocent Palestinians into refugees and the bullying Iraqi regime will no longer be able to make millions of Iraqi Muslim people homeless. All the tyranny exercised upon the Muslim people has come about because the Islamic world is not yet unified.

Ayatollah Emami-Kashani went on to support the exact position of the eminent leader of the revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran's president in all areas. He said: The movement that has started now is based on the Constitution and the ideas of the great leader of the Islamic revolution. God willing, the Islamic revolution will reach its zenith. Stressing the continuation of research in educational and cultural centers, he called on our generous people to perform their national duty by creating conditions appropriate for education and by assisting education.

Daily Criticizes West for Ignoring Refugees

NC1005153491 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 6 May 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Support for Human Rights!?"]

[Text] National interests or expediency is a fundamental concept in classical diplomacy. To preserve the national security and territorial integrity constitutes the most important part of the national security. Considering the fact that there is a close relationship between the identity crisis and immigration phenomenon we can say for sure that failure to control the influx of foreign nationals into Iran would threaten the country's national security.

At present, over 1.1 million Iraqis have fled their country and taken refuge in Iran and another half a million are expected to proceed towards the Iran-Iraq border at the first possible opportunity.

To cope with such an unprecedented immigration of Iraqi people there are some points which should be examined carefully.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, because of its commitment to Islamic and humanitarian principles, has so far accorded the best and warmest hospitality to the huge waves of the refugees flocking the country and it will, undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. But what the world, and the United Nations in particular, should do is to arrange an early return of the refugees to their home country.

As it has become clear, the goal of Western forces in extending their zones of influence in northern Iraq is something other than repatriation of the refugees.

Why doesn't the U.N. Security Council pass a timetable for the repatriation of the refugees?

The Iraqi regime has submitted to all the decisions and resolutions passed by the United Nations and if a plan is approved in this regard Saddam Husayn would certainly have to accept it. And in view of the likelihood of an agreement between Iraqi Kurdish opposition groups and the Baghdad regime, the security of the Kurds would also be ensured and they would be able to return home.

In compliance with its policy of supporting the oppressed of the world, the Islamic Republic of Iran by sheltering nearly five million refugees of various nationalities has borne numerous difficulties.

The Islamic Republic has done all within its power to help the refugees but it does not mean that we should shoulder the burden of those countries which have played a direct role in creating the present situation.

The Persian Gulf crisis and its repercussions and outcome all relate to Saddam Husayn's regime and the U.S.

The rulers of Baghdad, the Americans and their allied forces are responsible for the destruction of the wealth of both Iraqi and Kuwaiti nations and they themselves should pay the price.

Holding that the exodus of the Iraqi refugees would ease the problems facing the Iraqi Ba'th Party, Saddam Husayn is now sneering on the plight of his people and since the Americans are reluctant to donate any aid to two million refugees, the Iraqi people should be helped recognize their enemies and friends.

Those countries sending spoiled foodstuff and unusable clothing to the refugees have betrayed their nature to the Iraqi people and certainly in future, the oppressed nations will not forget this "support for human rights."

Saddam Resorts To Crimes Against Kurds

NC1005154191 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 5 May 91 p 2

[Editorial: "A Shi'a Genocide"]

[Text] While a number of Kurdish refugees have begun the trip back home the Shi'ites living in southern Iraq have begun to leave their homeland for another country in the wake of a bloody revenge by Saddam Husayn's Republican Guards units. Reports indicate that tens of thousands of Iraqi Shi'ite refugees have already entered the Saudi Arabian border town of Safwan. Middle East Watch, a human rights organization, reported on Friday that some 600,000 Iraqi Shi'ite refugees have gathered near Iran-Iraq southern border regions but that due to heavily mined fields they are unable to cross the border and come into Iraq.

Some of the Shi'ite refugees who succeeded to come to Iran via air from Safwan, revealed horrible stories about crimes committed by the Ba'thist forces, particularly the Republican Guards. Examples of mass executions of men, women and even children are among the atrocities of Ba'thists against their countrymen. According to eyewitnesses a written slogan on the body of a Republican Guards tank says: "There is no place for Shi'ites in Iraq" which indicate Saddam's goal of eradicating them and their popular uprising in that country where 70 percent of the people are Shi'ites. Fearing Saddam's future bloody revenge, thousands of Iraqis including old men and women as well as children have taken refugee in marshlands of southern Iraq in order to save their lives. At the present time just the large number of the homeless people in Iraq, both in north and south, indicate how remorseless the Ba'thists are.

Should Saddam achieve his final peace agreement with the Kurds, he will deploy his now stationed troops in the north, to the south and will massacre a lot of defenseless people. This is what the people in the south fear most. In his effort to end the popular resistance against his regime, Saddam is assured that he will not be even condemned by the West because a secular dictator is crushing a "Shi'ite fundamentalist revolt" which if it succeeds, will threaten the West's interests in the Middle East region.

The exodus of the Kurdish refugees which began in the first week of April and is still continuing has been considered the biggest refugee problem since World War II. And at that time all international organizations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees failed to cope properly with the problem Iran and Turkey faced, mainly because it was a very rapid and unexpected man-made disaster. But this time with respect to Shi'ite refugees and with prior knowledge about the criminal nature and record of Saddam and his cohorts, the international community should know that Iran will face even a greater refugee catastrophe because of the larger number of Shi'ite population in Iraq. Therefore, it is necessary for the U.N. and its affilated agencies to find a solution and means including military might of preventing Saddam from committing as yet further crimes against the Iraqi people, NOW.

Syrian Official Discusses Ties With Velayati

JN1005162891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Tehran—Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati received Mr. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, at noon today in Tehran. The meeting was attended by Hoseyn Sheykholeslam, Iranian deputy foreign minister; Mahmud Hashemi, director of the Middle East Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry; and Ahmad al-Hasan, Syria's ambassador in Tehran.

Their talks revolved around the situation in the region, bilateral relations, and the Iraqis who have fled to Iran. They also asserted that it was necessary to strengthen and deepen strategic Syrian-Iranian relations in the various fields.

Visits Bakhtaran Province

LD1105132691 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1220 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The Syrian minister of state for foreign affairs [Nasir Qaddur], accompanied by the Syrian ambassador in Tehran, arrived in Bakhtaran this morning. According to an IRNA report, the Syrian minister of state for foreign affairs, in a meeting with the deputy for political-security affairs of Bakhtaran Province, praised Iran's all-around efforts in getting aid to the Iraqi refugees.

Habibi Opens Nuclear Research Center in Karaj

LD1105123691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The Karaj nuclear agricultural and medical research center attached to Iran's Atomic Energy Organization was opened by First Vice President Habibi. According to the Central News Unit, Mr. Habibi viewed various sections of the center accompanied by Mr Amrollahi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization and vice president; nuclear experts and researchers; and a number of Majles. The officials in charge of each section briefed First Vice President Habibi on the work of each section.

According to the same report, the center is made up of chemistry and ionic radiation laboratories and sections for nuclear, medical, and agricultural research. It will carry out research on the uses of radiation in medicine and agriculture.

Oil Minister Names Participants in Conference

LD1105104791 Tehran IRNA in English 0855 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA—More than 200 renown world energy experts including oil ministers and representatives of international and national oil companies will take part in the international conference on oil and gas to be held in the ancient city of Esfahan May 27-29, said Iran's Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh-Kho'i here Saturday.

Among the delegates there are 10 oil ministers from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC countries. Representatives of the United Nations and the World Bank as well as experts from some 20 international oil companies including Shell, Chevron, Total, Mitsubishi, Nippon, Petronas, Pemex, Aqazadeh-Kho'i told reporters.

On energy outlook for the 90s, the minister said the idea is to establish and understanding between producers and consumers so that interests of the both sides are guaranteed. He said the conference will be the first to be held by an OPEC member.

The conference will be addressed by the oil ministers of Nigeria, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the Soviet Union, Venezuela, South Korea, Syria and the OPEC secretary general, he added.

As for protection of the environment, he said it will be one of the major topics to be raised in the conference since in the 90s the environment and ways of protecting it are of prime importance.

On investment in oil and natural gas industries, he said it is a vital issue and will also be raised in the course of the conference.

Aqazadeh-Kho'i said that oil ministers of Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have also been invited, but have excused themselves due to preoccupation.

Iran's oil minister said that foreign reporters can cover the conference and those interested should refer to the Iranian missions in their respective countries.

Asked about his trip to Pakistan next Tuesday, he said he will negotiate with Pakistani officials an agreement on a joint Tehran-Islamabad oil refinery to be built in Pakistan, sale of oil and natural gas to that country, bilateral relations and issues related to the trilateral Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) grouping Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

On Iran's offer to help cap the Kuwaiti oil wells, set on fire in the course of the Persian Gulf war, he said an expert delegation is currently in Kuwait and the result will be released within the next couple of days.

He added Iran had informed the Kuwaitis that it will cap the oil wells with a price 10 percent lower than the rates offered by others and in a shorter period of time. However, he chided that the Kuwaiti officials did not proceed on the matter quick enough. Had they agreed to the Iranian offer, so far a number of the wells would have been capped, Aqazadeh-Kho'i said.

Asked on Iran's oil output, he said at present it is 3.4 million barrels per day which includes both production and drawing from reserves. However, he said that certain OPEC members have violated OPEC quotas. Therefore, he concluded in the forthcoming OPEC meet June 4 serious measures must be adopted in this respect.

Majles Behavior During Impeachment Assessed

NC1005195791 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 25 Apr 91 pp 1, 11

[Unattributed commentary from the "Weekly Political Analysis" column]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The Majles successfully passed a sensitive test this week and showed that it continues to be worthy of the people's unwavering support.

The minister of education and training was impeached and summoned to the Majles this week. With a firm, reasonable, and self-confident attitude, he answered the charges brought against him concerning the problems faced by his ministry. The representatives also presented a logical and reasonable defense. In the end, the minister received a vote of confidence from the Majles.

It is the natural right of the Majles to question and even impeach cabinet ministers. The point is that this work should be carried out within the framework of acceptable rules and standards that are understood, accepted, and supported by the various strata of people.

This is a good time to examine some points in an even-handed way, without defending certain individuals and without opposing any individuals or certain groups.

First, the majority of the Majles passed the test and demonstrated that it understands how complicated and sensitive education and training are, especially at the beginning of the third trimester examinations. It also understands academic activities. Moreover, it showed that it understands what this impeachment meant—it was meant to show opposition to the government. And the Majles made the correct decision on the basis of "justice".

The second point is how to approach the problems in education and training. Indeed some of the disagreements and complaints did not show a professional approach to the sensitive educational problems, and the political aspect of these disagreements could be clearly seen.

The third point is that the Majles should be respected and they are the only ones who can develop these feeling from the society. One bitter reality is that some of the respectable representatives do not understand their own or the Majles' position. They should show more patience and their attitude should reflect more brotherly feelings and more compassionate behavior.

It is not proper for the Majles to propose some of the plans it does when faced with complicated and sensitive problems. In fact, some deputies demonstrate their impatience. Such attitudes damage the Majles, in particular, and the system, in general.

The fourth and most important point is that the Majles enjoys a lofty position that is backed by the Constitution. Therefore, it should keep all the nation's problems in mind. In order to do this, it is important that the necessary information on which views and decisions are based be gained from correct and reliable paths.

The problem is not the impeachment of a minister. This may be repeated tomorrow on the basis of wrong, distorted, and insufficient information about another minister. The question is how reliable was the evidence produced by the people involved in the impeachment process?

It seems that some of the reports received by the esteemed deputies have been weak and unprofessional. If the necessary attention in studying and following up the subject is not displayed, the blow that is inflicted can be shocking and paralyzing. This is a serious deficiency, which was further revealed in the impeachment process. Had the majority of the Majles deputies not been alert, the blow could have been shocking.

The issue here is not to defend or to side with an individual. Even those who have voted for impeachment, certainly do not think that education and training is a problem-free issue. The issue here is why weak, even incorrect, and probably self-motivated reports provide the basis for decisions. This is a question all the deputies, regardless of how they stand on the trial, should understand. The deputies should, when studying the activities of any institution or minister, acquire correct and reliable information based on reality. They should adopt more suitable approaches and consider the interests of the system and of the revolution above all other national issues.

Khamene'i on Need for Efficient, Powerful Forces

LD1105112991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic revolution and the commander in chief, in a meeting this morning with the commanders of the Ground Forces of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC], stressed the need for the continuous and exact training within the IRGC to be taken seriously as a scientific-military movement. He issued instructions that the IRGC Ground Forces be kept at a high performance level by staging various operational maneuvers. In the meeting attended by the IRGC commander in chief, the representative of the vali-ye faqih [supreme jurisconsult—Khamene'i], and the officials of the representative's offices in the IRGC Ground Forces, the commander in chief referred to the continuous, active presence in the units under their command and drew their attention to the complete and exact implementation of IRGC disciplinary regulations. The leader said that the self-sacrifice motivated by religious zeal is the secret for the continued victory of the Muslim people of Iran in various arenas. He said: Religious zeal combined with revolutionary spirit means Koranic thought and the pure religion in which self-sacrifice, generosity, innovation, self-reliance, and absolute trust in God are manifest. This has thus far brought about the victory of our fighters against the masses of our enemies. His Eminence Ayatollah Khameme'i viewed the real Islam and absolute submission to God's will as the creative force behind a believing community's glory. He added: We must reach where the world moves toward salvation and prosperity in connection with our community. Our path is long and arduous, and we all must create divine light within ourselves through education and purification. If we keep the revolution and its structure Islamic, the enmity of the superpowers and their intention of destroying this edifice will never wane; America and the world people and idols will never reconcile with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Continuing, the commander in chief stressed the need to confront the multifarious tricks of the enemies of Islam. He graciously said: The center of divine spirituality in Iran has heralded the negation of all tyrannies, oppressions, and evil deeds in the world. Therefore, the world powers are intent on changing it qualitatively. If they could not annihilate it physically, under these conditions it is our duty, on the one hand, to be prepared for spiritual development and to prevent our revolution

from becoming hollow from within; and, on the other, to keep our forces efficient, active, and powerful.

At the end of his remarks, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i reminded the IRGC commanders of the need for cooperation in carrying out their duties and pointed out that training, exercise, acquiring advanced combat equipment in conjunction with development, and moral and spiritual elevation for the military forces in the army and the IRGC is a duty.

President Suggests Military Figure as Commander

TA1305101691 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] We have learned that Hashemi-Rafsanjani has written a letter to 'Ali Meshkini, speaker of the Assembly of Experts, in which he states that the commander in chief of the armed forces must possess full military knowledge in order to be able to respond to complex military questions. In his letter Hashemi-Rafsanjani concluded that a military figure should, therefore, hold the post of commander in chief. It is worth noting that currently the commander in chief of the armed forces is Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i.

Nepal

Government Moves To Prevent Election Sabotage

BK1105090691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0849 GMT 11 May 91

[By Kedar Man Singh]

[Text] Kathmandu, May 11 (AFP)—Nepal's government took steps to prevent sabotage from leftists and drunkards as more than 11.1 million Nepalese prepared to vote Sunday in the first democratic parliamentary elections here in 32 years.

Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai feared that extreme leftist elements might disturb the general election and sabotage vital public installations, and 40,000 Royal Nepalese Army personnel were put on alert. "We have taken all necessary precautions to avert any such disturbances during or before the pollings on Sunday," Mr. Bhattarai said.

The Home Ministry banned the sale of liquor nationwide until midnight Sunday so "unruly elements" would not disturb the polling under the influence of alcohol. The government also banned heavy vehicles and public buses from all roads in the Kingdom. Moving with sticks or homemade weapons as well as using microphones and loudspeakers near polling booths is also prohibited.

All together 138,000 policemen and civilians have been assigned to manage 14,789 polling booths in 75 districts of this Himalayan Kingdom, including inaccessible mountain bases where modern surface communications do not exist. The electorate would choose 205 members for the House of Representatives for the next five years.

The Army was assigned to guard hospitals, jails, bridges, telecommunications centres, satellite ground stations, banks and government offices from possible sabotage by extreme leftists who decided to boycott the elections. Army officers carrying machine guns were seen Friday night patrolling the capital in camouflage uniforms.

An anti-monarchist faction of the Nepal Communist Party, said it would boycott the election because it is based on a "black" constitution given by the king. The party's spokesman said 11 activists have been arrested under Nepal's security act—which allows detention without criminal charge—at various places in the country. He said more were expected to be arrested by Sunday morning to prevent their planned protests against the ballotting.

Defense Ministry sources said all available helicopters would patrol 41 sensitive polling areas so that the Army could be immediately deployed to control any unruly situations.

Altogether 1,345 candidates belonging to 20 political parties and some 200 independents are contesting for 205 seats. The main contest is expected to be between the Nepali Congress and the United Marxist-Leninist factions of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP-ULM). They are closely followed by two National Democratic parties (NDP), made up of members of the former one-party panchayat [partyless] system, which was thrown out during a bloody uprising in the spring of 1990. Mr. Bhattarai and six ministers are also in the fray.

The campaign's major issues were developing rural areas, curbing two-digit inflation, eliminating unemployment and distributing land to the poor.

The Nepali Congress has promised a stable government, freedom and democracy if it is voted to power. Its rival NCP-ULM said it would give jobs to all unemployed youth, develop the national economy through industrialisation and give compulsory college education to women before marriage.

The leftist parties struck a last-minute deal to avoid multi-cornered contests among themselves. Out of 205 constituencies there will be only one leftist candidate in about 50 of them including Kathmandu, its satellite city of Lalitpur, and Chitaun located 120 kms (75 miles) south of the capital.

The Nepali Congress has put up 204 candidates, the NCP-ULM 177, followed by NDP (Thapa faction) 163 and the NDP (Chand faction) 154. The tropical lowland-based, pro-Indian Nepal Sadbhabana (Nepal Goodwill Party) is fielding 75 candidates.

Both the Nepali Congress and the left claimed they would win the elections, but analysts expected that no party would gain an absolute majority.

Mr. Bhattarai said that out of a total of 205 seats his party would lose a maximum of 50. He expessed his confidence in forming a single-party government and wanted to see the Nepal Communist Party form "a strong opposition".

Elections under the partyless panchayat system were dominated by local issues, but this time the debate was about ideology, with the Nepali Congress saying it is defending democracy, and the left advocating communism as the sole way to pull Nepal out of underdevelopment and poverty.

The elections are held under a new constitution that has made Nepal a constitutional monarchy. But the communists have tried to get support by criticising the king for his alleged interference in the elections. The Nepali Congress on the other hand has praised the king's impartial role in the runup to the polls.

Source Says Leftist Faction Threatens Voters

BK1205115891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1140 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Kathmandu, May 12 (AFP)—Activists from an extreme left party in Nepal threatened voters at gunpoint and threw bombs to disrupt polling at Pyuthan, 390 kilometres (230 miles) west of here, a Home Ministry source said Sunday.

There were no casualties in the attack, which reportedly involved members of the Nepal Communist Party Flaming Torches faction who are boycotting the polls because they are being held under a constitution that has not been approved by an elected assembly.

A spokesman for the anti-monarchist faction said two of its activists were arrested Sunday while trying to hoist black flags in a protest against the election of 205 members of the House of Representatives.

Sporadic disturbances were reported outside the capital but Home Minister Yog Prasad Upadhyay said there had been no casualties in any of the incidents.

An unconfirmed report said that supporters of the Nepali Congress, part of the interim ruling coalition, had captured polling booths in the southeastern towns of Bhutaha and Mahotari and had stopped people voting. Chief Election Commissioner Surya Prasad Shrestha refused to comment on the report.

Strong security measures have been taken to prevent any attempt to disrupt the polls, with Royal Nepal Army personnel patrolling the capital and riot police deployed around polling stations. About 15 Army helicopters are monitoring the situation in sensitive electoral districts outside the capital.

Mr. Shrestha appealed to voters to use their votes "without fear" in order to consolidate democracy in the country, adding that a large turnout would enhance Nepal's image abroad.

About 10 people were killed and 50 injured during the campaign for Nepal's first multi-party elections in more than three decades.

Communists Emerging as Formidable Force in Polls

BK1105060091 Bangkok THE NATION in English 11 May 91 p A8

[By Sonny Inbaraj in Kathmandu]

[Text] Nepalese teenagers come by the thousands onto the streets of Kathmandu chanting "Vote kema surya mal" (Vote for the sun), while carrying flags and banners with the red sun emblazoned across them. The red sun has replaced the ubiquitous white hammer and sickle against a red background in Nepal, which is holding its first multi-party elections in 32 years tomorrow.

A total of 11.1 million of the Himalayan Kingdom's estimated 19 million people are registered to vote in the May 12 elections, when 205 members of the House of Representatives are chosen from Nepal's 75 districts.

Despite the plethora of parties, there are only five real contenders—the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist faction—CPN-UML), the pro-monarchy National Democratic Party (Thapa), the Democratic Party (Chand), and a regional party.

But the battle royale is expected to come between the CPN-UML—contesting under the sign of the red sun, and the Nepal Congress, whose symbol is the tree.

The death of socialism elsewhere in the world has had little impact on Nepal. Unlike their counterparts in many countries where communism has collapsed, the Nepalese communists do not have the stigma of dictatorship.

Support for the communists comes from teenagers who rebelled against Nepal's all-powerful panchayat partyless system and forced King Birendra to lift a 30-year ban on political parties in April 1990.

The reformist interim government of Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai consists of members from the Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML was brought into power largely by youths who learned to face police batons and bullets in their demand for multi-party democracy. The pro-democracy demonstrations last year saw 500 people killed, 1,000 wounded and 10,000 arrested until the Harvard-educated king bowed to popular demand and restored full democracy.

The youths astounded bystanders with their slogans about the monarchy, previously kept sacrosanct by the Hindu belief that he is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, as well as by arbitrary jail sentences for those who spoke out.

The May 12 elections, which complete the change to democracy, sees the interim government fulfilling its pledge to lower the voting age from 21 to 18.

Of 11.1 million voters, the majority of them are youths voting for the first time.

"Many people, especially the young, have thrown their weight behind the communists because of their slogans of revolution and a new order for the poor and deprived have fired them with enthusiasm," said Furba Tamang, a restaurant owner in Kathmandu. "The cool mountain air here is thick with promises of free education up to secondary level and fresh opportunities for the young, whom the leftist politicians know are impatient for rapid change," he added.

Nearly half the population in Nepal has an income of only about Bt [baht] 8 a day and foreign debt has tripled in the last five years to about US$1.4 billion (Bt 35 billion). Only 12-13 percent of the GDP [gross domestic product] worth 76 billion Nepali rupees (Bt66.3 billion) encompasses low income people representing 40-50 percent of the population, in a country with a mere 30 per cent literacy rate.

Gopal Pauda, an office worker in his late teens said he supported the leftist movement in Nepal, because they believed in equality between the rich and the poor. "The sun is for the new generation," he said.

Prices in Kathmandu are about 20 to 30 per cent higher than a year ago. The most basic of Nepal's problems remain unresolved, even ignored, and people are not sure that they have a government which is much better than the regime run by the hated panchayat system.

The leftist leaders themselves admit that they never expected overwhelming ground swell support for the CPN-UML.

Communist leader Padma Ratna Tulaga, who is contesting in a constituency in Kathmandu, told THE NATION that before campaigning began about a month ago, the CPN-UML was only confident of between 35 to 40 seats nationwide. "Now with the overwhelming support we have received from the teenagers, we hope to garner at least 70 seats throughout Nepal," he said.

Though no one is about to predict with confidence if any one party will win with a simple majority of 103 seats, the scenario in question is which party will get the largest number of seats to initiate the setting up of a coalition government as a core government party.

"The CPN-UML could get the largest number of seats, but they should opt to be a junior partner in whatever coalition that emerges with the Nepali Congress. Alternatively they could be a formidable force in the opposition," said Yuba Nath Lamsal, a journalist with THE RISING NEPAL daily.

"There is an overwhelming danger that the party will not rise to the expectations placed on it by Nepalese youth. The CPN-UML is just not ready to form a government yet. They don't have the professionals and technocrats to get the government machinery working," he said.

The Nepali Congress is predictably posing as the patron saint of the prodemocracy movement and asking the people to place their faith in its ability to steer the country towards democratic political development.

"It is very absurd that today the communists are claiming that the popular movement was launched by them," said acting Nepali Congress president Krishna Prasad Bhattarai. It was because of the "glorious" democratic background of the Nepali Congress, which won a two-thirds majority in the 1959 elections, that made the revival of democracy in Nepal possible, he added.

The only previous multi-party elections were in 1959, when the Nepali Congress won by a landslide victory. The party ruled for 21 months before Birendra's father, King Mahendra, staged a palace coup and jailed the Nepali Congress leaders.

The communists early this year had mooted an idea of joining hands with the Nepali Congress in contesting the elections. Nepali Congress General-Secretary Girija Prasad Koirala ruled out the electoral alliance because he claimed that the Nepali Congress shared no common views on any matter with the communists, be it ideology, values, or political goals.

"That was indeed a sad thing. We (the communists) together with the Nepali Congress would have done so well if we gone on a joint platform. There wasn't actually a need to split the votes," said Patma Ratna Tulaga. "Nepali Congress now has taken a conciliatory approach towards the king by admitting ex-members of Birendra's partyless panchayat government," added Tulaga.

In an interview with the May issue of INDIA TODAY, Premier Bhattarai said: "I meet the king every week. The palace is very cooperative. It's unfair to drag it into conspiracy theories."

Observers indicate that if Parliament was hung, and the Nepali Congress was invited to form the government, there was a very strong likelihood that the pro-monarchist Thapa and Chand parties would be coalition members instead of the CPN-UML.

Despite the return of multi-party democracy, royalty remains perhaps the single most powerful institution in Nepal. The country's 35,000 strong army remains loyal to the king. The bulk of Nepal's police force is also said to be close to the palace through links between top officers and the royal family.

Nepal is a deeply divided society with numerous tribes, ethnic groups, languages, customs, religions, and ways of life, and with very weak unifying forces. Many Nepalese think the removal of the lid provided by the panchayat system could well release all the disparate forces which the country's somewhat inexperienced political leadership may find it difficult to manage.

If a new elected governmnent fails to improve the situation and more vidolence follows, then the monarch, with his military and police forces, will be in a strong position to dictate the course of Nepal's political future.